

A

SOVEREIGN ANTIDOTE

against all Grief.

Extracted out of the choicest Authors,
Ancient and Modern, both Holy and Humane.
Necessary to be read of all that any way
suffer Tribulation.

The Fourth Impression.

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CHAP. 33.

Use and Application of the former Reasons.

Use 1.



These latter Reasons being dispatcht, return we to make use of the former; for I may seem to have left them, and be gone quite out of sight: though indeed it cannot properly be call'd a digression, seeing the last of the former reasons, was; That God suffers his Children to be persecuted and afflicted for the increase of their Patience.

First, if God sends these afflictions, either for our Instruction, or Reformation, to scour away the rust of corruption, or to try the truth of

our *sanctification*, either for the increase of our *patience*, or the exercise of our *faith*, or the improvement of our *zeal*, or to provoke our *importunity*; or for the doubling of our *Obligation*: seeing true gold tries not the *touchstone*; Let us examine whether we have thus *husbanded* our *affliction* to his glory, and our own spiritual and everlasting good. I know Gods fatherly *chastisements* for the time, seem grievous to the best of his *Children*; Yea, at first they come upon us, like *Samsons Lion*, look terrible in shew, as if they would *devoure* us; and as *Children* are afraid of their *friends* when they see them masked, so are we. But tell me, hath not this *roaring Lion* prevailed against thy best part? Hast thou kept thy *head whole*? (I mean) thy *soul*; free? For as *Fencers* will seem to fetch a blow at the *leg*, when they intend it at the *head*; so doth the *Devil*, though he strike at thy name, his aim is to slay thy *soul*. Now instead of being overcome dost thou overcome? Hath this *Lion* yielded thee any *Honey* of *Instruction*, or *Reformation*? Hath thy sin died with thy fame, or with thy health; or with thy *peace*, or with thy *outward estate*? Dost thou perceive the *graces* of Gods *Spirit*, to come up, and flourish so much the more in the spring of thy recovery, by how much more hard and bitter thy *winter* of adversity hath been? Then thou hast approved thy self Christs faithful *Souldier*, and a *Citizen* of that *Jerusalem*, which is above: Yea, I dare boldly say of thee, as Saint *Paul* of himself, That *nothing* shall be able to separate thee from the love of God, which is in Christ *Jesus* our Lord, *Rom. 8. 39.* To finde this *Honey* in the *Lion*, more then makes amends for all former fear and grief: and in case any man, by his *humiliation* under the hand of God, is grown more faithful and conscionable: there is *Honey* out of the *Lion*: or is any man by his temptation or fall, become more *circumspect* after it? There is also *Honey* out of the *Lion*, &c. For there is no *Samson*, to whom every *Lion* doth not yield some *Honey*; for as *affliction* sanctified, ever leaves some *blessing* behinde it, like the *River Nilus*, which, by overflowing the Land of *Egypt*, fattenes, and fills it, with flowers and fruits; so a *fine wit*, and a *Christian will*, makes use of any thing: like the little *Bee*, which will not off the meanest *flower*, till she hath made somewhat of it. Even *Sauls* malice shall serve to enhance *Dauids* zeal: and the likelihood of losing *Isaac*, shall both evidence and improve *Abrahams* love to God: or, Hath the Lord made *Hannah* barren? And doth her adversary vex her sore, year by year; and grievously upbraid her for it, so that she is troubled in her minde? why even that shall make her pray, and weep sore unto the Lord, and make vows: yea, and when God gives *Samuel* to her, she will give *Samuel* back again to God. Lastly, Saint *Paul* in this *School of Affliction*, will learn in what estate soever he is, (prosperous, or adverse,) therewith to be content:

Phil. 4. 11. And thou mayest souly suspect thy self, if thou beest not the better for thy being the worse. He is no true born Christian who is not the better for his evils, whatsoever they be; no price can buy of the true believer, the gain of his sins. Yea, Satan himself, in his exercise of Gods Children, advantageth them. And look to it, if the malice and enmity of wicked men hath beaten thee off from thy profession, thou wert at the best but a counterfeit, and none of Christs own Band. A little faith, even so much as a grain of Mustard-seed, would be able to remove greater mountains of fear and distrust out of thy soul; then these: for know this, that Good men are like Diamonds, which will shine in the dirt: yea, they resemble Glow-wormes, which shine most in the dark; or Juniper, which smels sweetest in the fire; or Pomander, which becomes more fragrant by chafing; or Roses which are sweeter in the Still, then on the stalk.

Use 2.

2. If the malice of our enemies, as it is husbanded to our thrift (by a divine and supream providence) doth make so much for our advantage and benefit here, and hereafter; as namely, that it opens our eyes no less then peace and prosperity had formerly shut them; that nothing doth so powerfully call home the conscience, as affliction; and that we need no other art of memory for sin, besides misery; It commonly we are at variance with God, when we are at peace with our enemies, and that it is both hard and happy, not to be the worse with liberty, as the sedentary life is most subject to diseases: if vigour of body, and infirmity of minde, do for the most part lodge under one roof, and that a wearish outside be a strong motive to mortification: if God, the All-wise Physician, knows this the fittest medicine for our souls sickness, and that we cannot otherwise be cured; if our pride forceth God to do by us, as Scitovius did by his Army, who perceiving his Souldiers puffed up through many Victories, and hearing them boast of their many Conquests, led them of purpose into the lap of their Enemies, to the end that stripes might learn them moderation.

If this above all will make us pray unto him with heat and fervency: As whither should we flie but to our Joshua, when the powers of darkness, like mighty Aramites, have besieged us? If ever we will send up our prayers to him, it will be when we are beleaguer'd with evils.

If true, and saving joy be onely the daughter of sorrow, if the security of any people be the cause of their corruption, as no sooner doth the Holy Ghost in sundry places say, *Israel had rest*; but it is added, *They committed wickedness*: Even as standing waters soon grow noisome, and Vines that grow out at large, become wilde and fruitless in a small time: if it weans us from the love of worldly things; and makes us no less enamoured with heavenly: as Zeno, having but one flie-boat left him, hearing news that both it and all therein was cast away, said,

O Fortune, thou hast done well to send me again to our School of Philosophy: whereas if we finde but a little pleasure in our life; we are ready to dote upon it. Every small contentment glues our affections to that we like, neither can we so heartily think of our home above, whilest we are furnished with these worldly contentments: But when God strips us of them, straightways our minde is homeward. If this world may be compared to Athens, of which a Philosopher said, that it was a pleasant City to travel through, but not safe to dwell in: If by smarting in our bodies, states, or names, we are saved from smarting in our souls: If it was good for Naaman, that he was a Leper; good for David that he was in trouble; good for Bartimeus that he was blinde; if with that Athenian Captain, we should have perished for ever, in case we had not thus perished for a while; if our peace would have lost us, in case we had not a little lost our peace: Then refuse not the chastening of the Lord, neither be grieved with his correction, as Solomon adviseth, Prov. 3. 11. And so much the rather,

1 First, because our strugling may aggravate, cannot redress our miseries,

2 Secondly, because the Lord will be sanctified either of us, or on us; one of the two, as Saint Augustine speaks.

3 Thirdly, because that is little which thou sufferest in comparison of what thou deservest to suffer; for thou hast deserved to be destroyed: and he that hath deserved hanging, may be glad if he scape with whipping. Besides, as David told Saul, he could as easily have cut his throat, as he had, his coat: or as Caesar boasted to Metellus, he could as soon make him hop headlesse, as bid it be done: so the Lord may expostulate with thee, and much more.

Wherefore be patient, I say, but not without sense; be not of those Stoicks, (Blocks rather you may stile them) who like beasts, or rather like blocks, lie under their burthen, and account it greatest valour to make least ado, and lay it as little as may be to heart: For if you mean to be the Kings sonnes, you must bring him the fore-skins of an hundred Philistines: shew him the fruit of your former sufferings. But above all, let us not resemble the wicked; who if affliction comes to them, receive the curse with cursing; and if the Devil throw but one cross to them, they will take their souls and throw them again to him, for they presently break out, either into some cursed rage, or into the rage of cursing, or into some cursed affliction.

An usual thing, when men are crossed by the creatures (I might say, their own husbands or children) to fall a cursing, and blaspheming them, to whom we may say, as the Prophet did to Sennacherib: 2 Kings 19. 12. *Whom hast thou blasphemed? And against whom hast thou exalted thy self? Even against the Holy One of Israel.* Whom are you angry withal? Dost the rain and waters, or any other creature displease you? Alas, they are but ser-

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wants, if their Master bid smite, they must not forbear: they may say truly what *Rabshakeh* usurped, Are we come without the Lord? *Isai. 36. 10.* Yea, are we not sent of the Lord in love, and to do you good, and to give you occasion of rejoicing afterward, if you bear the Cross patiently, and make that use of it which others do, and the Lord intends? Yea, Saint Paul could rejoyce even in tribulation.

But alas, these are so far from rejoicing with that blessed *Aposile*, that they rave in tribulation; and like some beasts, grow mad with baiting; or like frantick men wounded, who finding ingredients prepared to dress them, tear them all in pieces. But let us not be like them, if Satan robs us of a bag of silver, let not us call after him, and bid him take a bag of gold also: If he afflict thee outwardly, yet surrender not to him the inward; rail not at the Hangman, but run to the Judge; fret not with *Joash*, *2 Kings 6. 33.* but submit with *Hezekiah*: *Isai. 39. 8.* When Gods hand is on thy back, let thy hand be on thy mouth: If thou beest wronged, call not thine adversary to account, but thy self, and let it trouble thee more to do ill, then to hear of it; be more sorry that it is true, then that it is known.

Yea, neither rage at the Chirurgeon, as mad-men, nor frown under his hand, as Milk-sops; but consider with whom thou hast to do: The Lord, the Lord strong, merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in goodness and truth, reserving mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty, but visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon childrens children, unto the third and fourth generation: *Exod. 34. 6. 7.* And this (if any thing) will do: It was before the Lord, saith David, and therefore I will be yet more vile. Reproach in Gods service, is our best preferment: the Lord so noble; the servant cannot be too humble: even *Bucephalus*, that disdained any other rider, in all his trappings would kneel down to his Master Alexander, and go away proud of his burthen.

Yea, to go yet further, let us with good old Eli, (who was a good son to God, though he had been an ill Father to his sons) even kiss the very rod we smart withall; and say, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good: for whatsoever seemeth good to him, cannot but be good, howsoever it seems to us. Yea, let us receive his stripes with all humility, patience, piety, and thankfulness; resolving as that holy Martyr, John Bradford, who said to the Queen (how much more did he mean it to the great King of Heaven and Earth) If the Queen will give me life, I will thank her; if she will banish me, I will thank her; if she will burn me, I will thank her; if she will condemn me to perpetual imprisonment, I will thank her. A man will easily swallow a bitter Pill, to gain health. The stomach that is purged, must be content to part with some good nourishment, that it may deliver it self of more evil hu-

moans; and the *Physician* knows what is best for the *Patient*: the *Nurse* better than the *Infant*, what is good and fit for it. Now the *Tenant* is more noble than the *House*; therefore why are we not more joyed in this, then *dejected* in the other? since the least grain of the increase of *grace*, is more worth, then can be equalled with whole pounds of *bodily vexation*. Yea, let us take them as tokens and pledges of *Gods love* and favour, who loves his *Children* so, as not to make *wantons* of them. They that would tame *pamper'd Horses*, do add to their travel, and abate of their provender, as *Pharaoh* served the *Children of Israel*. Which of us shall see *pieces of Timber* cut and squared, and plained by the *Carpenter*, or *Stones* hewn and polished by the *Mason*, but will collect and gather, that these are *Stones* and *Timber* which the *Master* would employ in some *building*? If I suffer, it is that I may reign. And how profitable is that *affliction*, which carrieth me to *Heaven*? Oh, it is a good change, to have the *fire of affliction* for the *fire of Hell*: Who would not rather smart for a while, then for ever? It's true, these *wasps*, wicked men, sting *shrewdly*, but the *Hornet*, *Sathan*, would sting worse a great deal. And not seldom doth the infliction of a lesse punishment, avoid a greater.

Neither must any man think to be alwayes free from *censures*, *aspersions*, and *wrongs*, nor sometimes from *faults*: The very *Heathen* could say, It is for none but *God* to *seale* or *want* nothing. Indeed, many are too apt to expect it, and therefore can bear nothing, like *Minderides*, the *Sybarite*, who was grieved for that some of the *Rose-leaves* which he lay upon, were crumpled together: But this is to *vilipend*, and *undervalue* his kindness; to make no repite, nor reckoning of his deepest *indulgencies*, whereas the contrary, *approoves our sincerity* beyond all exceptions. Every man can open his hand to *God* while he blesses, but to expose our selves willingly to the afflicting hand of our *Maker*, and to kneele to him while he scourges us, is peculiar to the *faithfull*.

3. Use.

3. Thirdly, if the *sharp sufferings*, and *bitter conflicts*, and *sove travels* of *Gods children*, are usually the *forerunners* of a joyfull issue; even the happy *birth* of saving *repentance*: & that the sharp pain of the *Chirurgions* cutting them, is only to ease them of a more durable and dangerous, yea, a far heavier pain, the *stone of the heart*: If while their enemies go about to rob them, they do but *enrich* them; As that *Sexton*, who in the night went to rob a *Gentlewoman*, that had been buried the day before, with a *gold Ring*, and having opened the *coffin*, loosed the *sheet*, and chased her *finger* to get it off, the having been but in a *swone* before: her *spirits* *renewing*, she revived, and for many years after lived comfortably. If they may be resembled to the *five loaves* in the *Gospel*, which by a strange *Amplification*, were multiplied by *Division*, and augmented by *Substraction*; then

then let none dare to flatter, or flatter themselves, because their estate is prosperous; especially in an evil way: As it fared with *Leah*, who we may hear thus chanting her happiness: God, saith she, hath given me my reward, because I have given my maid to my husband: *Gen.* 30. 18. when she should rather have repented then rejoiced. And the like with *Micah*, *Judg.* 17. 13. and *Saul*, *1 Sam.* 23. 7. and *Dionysius*, when he found the winds favourable in his navigation, after he had despoiled the Temple of all the gold therein. Neither let such as suffer not, censure their brethren that do, as those three mis-judged of *Job*, that he was an hypocrite, and a greater sinner then others; and God had cast him off, or else it could not go so ill with him. Or as the Jews censured our Saviour, *Isa.* 53. 3, 4. And those Barbarians, Saint Paul, *Acts* 28. 4. which is to condemn the generation of Gods children, *Psal.* 73. 15. But rather mistrust themselves, which was the use our Saviour warned those to make of it, who told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices, *Luke* 13. 1, to 6.

And indeed, he is blinde that judgeth of mans felicity by his outward prosperity, or concludes of ones misery from his calamity: *Ecclef.* 9. 1, 2. The Sun of prosperity shines no lesse upon brambles in the wilderness, then fruitfull trees in the Orchard. The cold frost and snow of adversity, lights upon Gardens, as well as the wilde waste. *Ahabs* and *Josiahs* end, concur in the very circumstances, the one destroyeth Religion. the other restoreth it: yee both shot with an Arrow. *Saul* and *Jonathan*, though different in dispositions, yet in their deaths they were not divided: *Zedekiah* a wicked man, had his eyes put out: so had *Samson*, the valiant Judge of *Israel*, and Type of *Christ*. *Moses* and *Aaron*, both were shut out of *Canaan*, as well as the malignant spies: so that if we judge of mens persons by their outward conditions, we must needs erre.

Yea, usually God doth most afflict those, whom he best affecteth; dealing with his children, as the good husband deals with his Trees; those in the Garden he is ever and anon meddling with them, either lopping off the superfluous branches, or scraping off the mosse, or paring of the root, or digging and dunging them; so using all good means to make them fruitfull: whereas he lets them alone which grow in the Hedge-row, or Forrest, till at length he comes with his Axe, and cuts them down for the fire. He was not the best Disciple that had the bag: and fatted ware, you know is but fitted for the shambles. God puts money indeed (as some Hoorders do) into these earthen boxes, that have only one chinke to let in, but none to let out, with purpose to break them when they are full. What was *Haman* the better for his honour, while the King frowned on him; or the happier for being lift up the ladder, when he was to come down again with a rope?

And for ought thou knowest, (at least, if thou takest not heed, for
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prosperity is the more dangerous enemy of the two, and skilfull to destroy,) thy preservation is but a reservation; as it fared with *Sodome* and her sisters, which were preserved from the slaughter of the four Kings, that God might rain down *Hell* from *Heaven* upon them. And *Sennacherib*, who escaped the stroak of the destroying Angel, that he might fall by the sword of his own sons, *Isa. 37. 37, 38*. Say then, one *wo*, the *wo* of adversity, (as thou accountest it) hath passed thee, perhaps there is a second, and a third, worse; behind: *Revel. 9. 12*, and *8. 13*. The Philosopher would see a mans end before he pronounc'd him happy. Yea, it may be, that which thou account'st thy primest privilege, may prove to thee a snare, and may be granted thee rather out of anger then love, as the Devil left *Jobs* tongue un-touched of all the rest, but why? in hope that therewith he would have cursed God; or charged him with folly and cruelty: so that we may say of prosperity, as *Antigonus* did of his garment; O noble, rather then happy privilege! but of adversity, O happy rather then noble favour!

4 Use.

4. Fourthly, if Affliction be so profitable, and prosperity so dangerous as hath been shewn; if it be our *Isaacs* use, first to feel us by tribulation, and then to blisse us; then away with those foolish queries, Why doth God this, and why that? why doth he punish the innocent, and acquit the peccant? why doth he permit so many, and such notorious crimes? why is he so severe towards his own; so gentle to others? Ask not (saith *Salvianus*) why one is greater, another less; one wretched, another happy? I know not Gods intent, but it is sufficient satisfaction to me, that this is done by God. Why doth a Physician give more wormwood, or Hellebore to this sick party, then to that? even because, either his disease, or his constitution so requires it.

Neither let us value things as they seem, or according to sense; but rather when we are best pleased let us be most suspicious: let us desire and chuse blessings, as he chose his friend; not him that would be plausible to his humour for a day, but him that should be profitable to his minde during life. Let us imitate Bees that pass over *Roses* and *Violets*, to set upon *Thyme*: If crosses are not toothsome, let it suffice that they are wholesome: 'Tis not required in Physick that it should please, but heal: unless we esteem our pleasure above our health.

Experience tells us, that those things (for the most part) which are least pleasing, are most wholesome: *Rue* is an herb most bitter to the taste, yet in regard of the vertue, which is in it, we call; Herb of Grace: And *Mithridate*, though of all other *Electuaries* it be most distastful; yet of all others, it is the most wholesome.

The world hates thee, and deals most spitefully with thee; a good sign: It hath always been the portion of good men, to suffer at the hands of

of evil men; as appears both by holy, and humane Writers: as for *Divine Authority*, you know how it fared with the *Prophets*, *Apostles*, and our Saviour *Christ* himself, whose whole life, by reason of spiteful enemies, was but one continued cross. And as touching *secular*, examples are infinite; whereof a few: In *Athens*, we read of wise *Socrates*, good *Phocion*, just *Aristides*, victorious *Miltiades*; but how unworthily were they dealt withall? At *Rome* they had *Marcus Cato*, the pattern of a wise and prudent man, a lively emblem of *Vertue*; how was he hated, thrust down, spit upon, stript both of his *Senatorship*, and *Pratorship*, cast into prison, &c. *Rutilius* and *Camillus* were both exiled. *Pompeus* and *Cicero* both yielded their necks to their Clients: Who so often curst by the *Popes*, with *Bell*, *Book*, and *Candle*, as *Queen Elizabeth* of blessed memory? though she out-liv'd seven of them.

But to leave *examples*; and come to reason: Is it not an evident sign, that if the world hates thee, thou art none of the world? yea, therefore it hates thee, because thy practice shames the world; and because thou discoverest, and opposeth her *treasons* and *deceits*. Wicked men are like *dogs*, in condition, who will let a man amble a fair pace, quietly: but if he gallop through the *Town*, though his errand be of importance, and to the *King*, perhaps, they will bark and flie at him, which is a token to them, of *perdition*, but to thee of *salvation*: *Phil. 1. 28.* yea, it is an evident sign, that they are of the stock of *Ishmael*, and not the seed of *Israel*. I finde many acts of *deception* in the *Saints*; I finde *infirmity* in those acts, but that any one of them hath scost at, and hated another for *goodness*; I finde not: or that have used to dispute against it: *Gregory Nazianzen*, (I pray minde it seriously) told his friends; that *Julian* would prove a notorious wicked man: he took such delight in disputing against that which was good. Much less that any after *regeneration*, have in this case been *cruel*. If we would know (saith *Chrysostome*) a wolf from a *Sheep* (since their *cloathing* is alike) look to their *fangs*, and their *mouth*, if they be bloody: for who ever saw the *lips* of a *Sheep* besmeared with *blood*? which being so; No matter though the *gate* be *strait*, and the *way* narrow, if the end to which it leadeth be *everlasting life*.

5 use.

5 Fifthly, if in conclusion the most malicious and damnable practices of our worst and greatest enemies prove no other ineffect to us; then did the malice of *Josephs* brethren, *Mistress*, and *Lord* to him: the first, in *selling* of him; the second, in *falsly accusing* him; the third, in *imprisoning* him; (all which made for his inestimable good and benefit;) then the malice of *Haman* to *Mordecai*, and the *Jews*; whose bloody decree obtain'd against them; procured them exceeding much joy and peace: then *Balaams* malice to the children of *Israel*, whose desire of *cursing* them, caused the

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Lord so much the more to bless them, *Numbers 23*. Then the Devils spite to Job, who pleased him more by his sore afflicting him, than any thing else could possibly have done, whether we regard his name, children, substance, or soul; then Judas his treason against the Lord of life, whose detestable fact served not only to accomplish his will, but the means also of all their *salvations*, that either before or after should believe in him: this should move wonder, to astonishment, and cause us to cry out with the Apostle; *O the deepness of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements, and his wayes past finding out! Rom. 11. 33.* O the wonderful and sovereign goodness of our God! that turns all our Poisons into Cordials; that can change our terrors into pleasures; and makes the greatest evils beneficial unto us, for they are evil in their own nature, and strong temptations to sin: *James 1. 2.* also fruits of sin, and part of the curse, and work those former good effects, not properly by themselves, but by accident; as they are so disposed by the infinite wisdom, goodness, and power of God, who is able to bring light out of darkness, and good out of evil: yea, this should tutor us to love our enemies. (We love the medicine, not for its own sake, but for the health it brings us) and to suffer cheerfully whatsoever is laid upon us: for how can Gods Church in general, or any member in particular but fare wel, since the very malice of their enemies benefits them? How can we but say, Let the World frown, and all things in it run cross to the grain of our mindes? Yet, with thee, O Lord, is mercy, and plenteous redemption: thou makest us better, by their making us, worse.

Objection. But perhaps thou hast not proved the truth of this by thy own knowledge; and particular experience.

Answer. If thou hast not; thou shalt in due time: the end shall prove it: stay but till the conclusion, and thou shalt see that there is no cross, no enemy, no evils can happen unto thee, that shall not be turned to good, by him that dwelleth in thee. Will you take Saint Pauls word for it, or rather Gods own word, who is Truth itself, and cannot lie? His words are, we know that all things work together for the best, unto them that love God; even to them that are called of his purpose, *Rom. 8. 28.* And in Verse 35, 36. after he hath declared that Gods chosen people shall suffer tribulation, and anguish, and persecution, and famine, and nakedness, peril, sword, &c. be killed all the day long, and counted as sheep for the slaughter; he concludeth with, Nevertheless, in all these things we are more then conquerours, through him that loved us: and so goeth on, even to a challenge of our worst enemies, Death, Angels, Principalities and Powers, things present, and to come; height, depth, and what other creature besides, should stand in opposition. What voluminous waves be here, for number, and power, and terror! yet they shall not separate the Ark from Christ, nor

a soul from the Ark, nor a body from the soul, nor an hair from the body, to do us hurt. What saith David? Mark the upright man, and behold the just; for the end of that man is peace: *Psal. 37. 37.* Mark him in his setting out, he hath many oppositions; mark him in the journey, he is full of tribulations; but mark him in the conclusion, and the end of that man is peace. In Christ all things are ours, *1 Cor. 3. 21.* How is that? Why, we have all things, because we have the Haven of all things. And if we love Christ, all things work together for our good; yea, for the best: *Rom. 8. 28.* And if all things, (quoth Luther) then; even sin it self. And indeed, how many have we known the better for their sin? Mary Magdalen had never loved so much, if she had not so much sinned: had not the incestuous person sinned so notoriously, he had never been so happy. God took the advantage of his humiliation, for his conversion. Had not one foot slip into the mouth of Hell, he had never been in this forwardness to Heaven: Sin first wrought sorrow (saith Saint Augustine) and now godly sorrow kills sin; the daughter destroyes the mother: neither do our own sins onely advantage us, but other mens sins work for our good also.

Objection. But may some say, Can any good come out of such a Narrative?

Answer. Yes, The advantage we have by Christ, is more then the loss we had by Adam. If Arius had not held a Trinity of Substances, with a Trinity of Persons; and Sabellius an Unity of Persons, with an Unity of Essences; the Mysteries of the Trinity had not been so clearly explained by those great Lights of the Church. If Rome had not so violently obtruded her Merits; the doctrine of Justification onely by faith in Christ, might have been less digested into mens hearts. We may say here, as Saint Augustine doth of Carthage and Rome; if some enemies had not contested against the Church, it might have gone worse with the Church. Lastly, suppose our enemies should kill us, they shall not hurt, but pleasure yea, even death it self shall work our good. That Red-sea shall put us over to the Land of Promise: and we shall say to the praise of God, we are delivered, we are the better for our enemies, the better for our sins, the better for death; yea, better for the Devil: and to think otherwise, even for the present; were not onely to derogate from the wisdom, power, and goodness of God, but it would be against reason; for in reason, if he hath vouchsafed us that great mercy to make us his own, he hath given the whole army of afflictions, a more inviolable charge, concerning us, then David gave his Host, concerning Absalom; See ye do the young man, my son Absalom no harm. Now, if for the present thou lackest faith, patience, wisdom, and true judgement how to bear, and make this gain of the cross; Ask it of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and reproacheth no man, and it shall be given thee, *Jam. 1. 5.* For every good giving, and every perfect gift, is from above; and cometh down from the Father of lights: Verse 17.

6 use.

6 Sixthly, (for this point calling more for *practise* then *proof*, it behoves us to be larger here, briefer there) If that which is *one mans meat*, proves *another mans poison*; let it be acknowledged, that the fault is not in the meat, but in the stomach: and that it is the wickedness of our hearts, & want of a sincere endeavour, to make good use of Gods corrections, which causeth him to withdraw his blessing from them. Wherefore let it provoke us as we love *our selves*, as we love our *souls*, through all the *transitory*, *temporary*, *momentary* passages of this World; first, to strive after, and then to preserve the life of our *lives*, and *soul* of our *souls*, *sincerity*, and *integrity*.

Again, If *afflictions* (which are in their own nature, evil, and unto others, strong temptations to sin) by the goodness of God, do make so much for our advantage, and benefit here, and hereafter: If our Heavenly Father turns all things, even the malice of Satan, and wicked men, yea, our own sins to our good: Rom. 8. 28. If for our sakes, and for his Names sake, he even changeth the nature and property of each creature, rather then they shall hurt us; as it is the nature and property of fire to burn, yet that vehement fire in Nebuchadnezzars Furnace, did not burn the three servants of God. It is proper to the Sea to drown those that be cast into it; yet it did not drown the Prophet, in the very depth of it. It is proper for hungry ravenous Lions to kill, and devour, yet they did Daniel no harm. And the like, when we need their help. It is proper for the Sun to move, yet it stood still at the prayer of Joshua: proper for it to go from East to West; yet for Hezekiahs confirmation, it went from West to East: It is proper for Iron to sink in the water, yet it swam when the children of the Prophets had need of it. In like manner; It is proper for affliction to harden, and make worse, as well as for riches and prosperity to ensnare: But as some Simples are by Art, made medicinable, which are by nature, poisonable: So afflictions which are in nature destructive; by grace, become preservative. And as evil waters when the Unicorns horn hath been in them, are no longer poisonable, but healthful; or as a wasp when her sting is out, may awaken us by buzzing, but cannot hurt us by stinging: So fares it with affliction, when God pleaseth to sanctifie the same, as he doth to all that love him, Rom. 8. 28. For of God it is, (without thanks to affliction, or our selves, or our sins) that we are bettered by them: All the work is thine, let thine be the glory.

But lastly, (for though we can never be thankful enough for this, yet this is not all) that we should finde him a Saviour; whom our enemies finde a just revenger; That we should be loosed from the chains of our sins, and they delivered into the chains of Plagues; That the same Christ should with his precious blood free us, that shall with his word sentence them.

Again,

Again, if we were by nature the Seed of the Serpent, children of the Devil, and Subjects to that Prince which ruleth in the air, even that spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience, Ephes. 2. 2. We may learn by it, to be humble and thankful, if charged to be the womans seed, children of God, and members of Christ: since we were once in so vile a condition; for God found nothing in us but Enmity, 1 Cor. 15. 20. Rom. 7. 18, 25. We are not born, but new-born Christians: And whereas he might have left us in that perishing condition (being bound to none) and have chosen others; he hath of his free grace adopted us, and left others. What's the reason? surely no reason can be given, but O the depth! only this I am sure of, it is a mercy beyond all expression! O my soul, thou hast not room enough for thankfulness.

Wherefore let it provoke us so to love him, that we shew forth the virtues, and fruits of him that hath called us, and done all this for us, 1 Peter 2. 9. But I fear we forfeit many of Gods favours, for not paying that easie rent of thankfulness.

For conclusion, If we be the seed of the woman, and our enemies, the Seed of the Serpent; let us go before them in goodness, as far as God hath preferred us before them in mercy: let us be able to say of our enemies, as Job of his, I have not suffered my mouth to sin, by wishing a curse unto his soul, Job 31. 30. Yea, let us send down water from our compassionate eyes, and weep for them by whom we bleed. In brief, let us hate their opinions, strive against their practice, pity their misguidings, neglect their censures, labour their recovery, and pray for their salvation.

CHAP. 34.

That though God disposeth of all their malice to his Childrens greater good, yet they shall be rewarded according to their mischievous intentions.

IF it be so, that the malice of wicked men makes so much for the Ob. behoof of Gods people; and that whatsoever they do unto us, is but the execution of Gods will, and full accomplishment of his just decree; it may seem to make on their side, and not only extenuate their evil, but give them occasion of boasting.

Ans. Although God disposeth it to the good of his children, that he may bring about all things to make for his own glory; yet they intend onely evil in it, as namely; the Dishonour of God, the ruine of mens souls (as I have proved in the Drunkards Character) and the satisfying of their own serpentine enmity, and thirst of revenge. We must therefore learn to distinguish betwixt the act of God and of an enemy, as indeed Gods people do; when ye thought evil against me (saith Joseph to his brethren) God disposed it to good, that he might bring to passe as it is this day, and save much people alive, Gen. 50. 20. God had no hand in doing the evil,

evil, but God will have a hand in the disposing of it: When Satan and wicked men have their wills, even therein also is Gods will fulfilled, for Gods will is the highest cause of all things, *Psal. 115. 3, 4.* Yea, the holy God challengeth to himself whatsoever is done in the City, *Amos 3. 6.* but so, as neither wicked mens sins shall taint him, nor his decree justifie them: the sin is their own, the good which comes of it is Gods, the benefit ours; He doth well, in suffering to be done, whatsoever is evil done, saith Saint *Augustine*, and is just in their injustice. God will the same action, as it is a blessing, trial, or chastisement of his children, which he hates as the wickedness of the agent: because in the same thing which they did, there was not the same cause for which they did it. The lewd tongue, hand, or heart, moves from God, it moves lewdly from Satan: wicked men are never the freer from guilt and punishment, for that hand which the holy God hath in their offensive actions. To instance in some examples; Satan did nought touching Job, but what the Lord upon his request gave him leave to do; what then? Did God and Belial joyn in filling the same act? No: sooner shall Stygian darkness blend with light, the frost with fire, day with night: true, God and Satan will'd the self-same thing; but God intended good, Satan ill; Satan aimed at Jobs, and God at his confusion. God used the malice of Pharaoh and Shimei unto good; what then? God afflicted his people with another mindethen Pharaoh, did; God, to increase them, Pharaoh, so suppresseth them. The sin of Shimei's curse was his own, the smart of the curse was Gods; God wills that as Davids chastisement, which he hates as Shimei's wickedness. God owed a revenge to the house of Eli, and by the delation of Doeg, he took occasion to pay it, when the Priests were slain: It was just in God, which in Doeg, was most unjust; Sauls cruelty, and the treachery of Doeg, do not lose one dram of their guilt, by the counsel of God: Neither doth the holy counsel of God, gather any blemish by their wickedness: If it had pleased God, to inflict death upon them sooner, without any pretence of occasion; his justice had been clear from all imputations. Now if Saul or Doeg be instead of a Pestilence or Fever; who can cavil? The judgements of God are not ever manifest, but are alwayes just. Again, the curse of the Serpent bestowed blessedness on Man; yea, our first Parents had been lesse glorious, if they had not wanted a Saviour. What then? Doth Satan merit thanks? No, but the contrary; for he onely intended the final ruine and destruction of them and all mankind, with the dishonour of their Maker. Lastly, the Devil does us good in this particular case, for while he assailes us with temptations, and afflicts us with crosses, he in effect helps us to Crowns. Yet still no thanks to Satan, for to be charitable is more then his meaning; it is that Divine and over-ruling Providence of God, which we are beholding unto, and to him give we the thanks.

But

But above all, our Saviours example will most excellently distinguish the ends of God, Satan, and wicked Men; for if we observe, *Judas delivered him to death for gain, the Jewes for envy, Pilate for fear; the Devil provoked each of them through this enmity; Christ himself, to obey his Fathers will, God the Father in love to sinners, and for their Redemption*: each furthered one and the same thing, but to contrary ends: so when this enmity breaks forth in the wicked, Satan hath a hand in it as a malicious authour; as when he entred into *Judas*, and made him betray Christ, Luke 22.3. *Man himself as a voluntary instrument, as when Pharaoh hardened his own heart against the children of Israel, Exod. 9.34. God as a most righteous Judge, and avenger, as when he also hardened Pharaohs heart, so punishing his former hardnesse, with further obduration, Exod. 9.12.* But how in this case? Even by permitting the seed of the Serpent, from their own malicious inclination, to hate the seed of the Woman, not by infusing this malice, but by with-drawing his grace when he sees it abused: he doth not infuse corruption, he doth not withhold the occasion; as when the Rider gives his horse the reins, we say he puts him on.

Whence that distinction of adversities, as they come from Satan, they are usually called temptations; as they come from Men, persecutions; as from God, afflictions.

Now as God turned the treachery of *Judas*, not onely to the praise of his justice, mercy, wisdom, power, &c. but to the good of all believers: so he turnes this enmity of Satan and wicked men, to his childrens great advantage (in stopping them in their courses of sin and keeping them in exercise) and his own glory: And well may he work good by evil instruments, when every Prince and Magistrate hath the seat to make profitable instruments, as well of evil persons, as of good: yea, when there is nothing in the world, be it gall it self; yea, the excrement of a Dog, or the poison of a Serpent, but mans shallow invention can finde it is good for something: neither do two contrary poisons mingled together prove mortal.

And thus you see that the will of God may be done thanklesly, when in fulfilling the substance, we fail in the intentions, and erre in circumstances.

Now see with the like patience, how it will fare with these men in the end. *Pomponius Atticus* being destin'd to famishment, & receiving no manner of sustenance for many dayes; contrary to the intention; was freed by means of that abstinence from a violent pain, & recovered of a disease, which otherwise had cost him his life. *Prometheus* being run in with a Rapier, and *Jason* receiving a great blow on the brest, each was restored to health, from dangerous and deadly impostumes, which otherwise were thought

thought incurable. And this is our case, for even as that *cured them*, which their enemies intended should have *killed them*; so this enmity of the Serpent and his Seed, cures our souls, and makes us everlastingly *happy*. Yet they intending only evil in it, or at least the satisfying of their own wicked wills, (as they know better then I, wherein they imitate the *weasel*, which doth a man pleasure in *destroying of Vermine*, yet only intends the satisfying of her *own hunger*, nor his good that keeps the house) can no way assume the least *praise* to themselves, nor expect the more favour. That which is *ill of it self* is not to be ventured on for the *good which cometh by accident*. It is no privilege to be an *instrument of good by evil means*: Nor can you expect to fare better without a healing of your errors, then the *worme in the stomach*, which, when it hath devoured all the matter proper for it, *dies it self*: or *Heleborus*, which after it hath wrought the cure within the body, is cast up again, together with the *Milady*.

The Lord doth often good to his Church, even by those Instruments whom for their sins he means to cast into *Hell-fire*. *Ashur* was his Rod to scourge *Israel*; that done, they fell under a sharper *lash themselves*: *Those Nations*, saith God, shall serve the King of *Babel* seventy years; and when the seventy years are accomplished, I will visit the King of *Babel* and that *Nation* for their iniquities, and will make it a perpetual desolation, &c. *Jer.* 25. 11, 12. and 30, 16. even the greater sinners may punish the lesse, and prosper for a time; *Ezekiel* 7. I will bring the most wicked of the *Heathen*, and they shall possess their Houses, *vers.* 24. When iniquity hath plaid her part, vengeance leaps upon the Stage; the *Comedy* is short, but the *Tragedy* is longer.

We use *rubbish* to scour our vessels, when those vessels are cleared, we *fling away the rubbish*. Bridges that help men over the stream, at last themselves rot and sink in. When *Balaams Asse* had done speaking, *humana voce*, she lived an *Asse*, and died an *Asse*: So when God hath sufficiently afflicted the righteous, by the rod of the wicked, he will fling the Rod into the fire which is unquenchable, *Isa.* 33. 1.

And it stands with the strength of reason, for if God, saith Saint Gregory, strike so smartly those whom he spareth; how heave will his blows be on them whom he condemneth; and with what severity shall *Castaways* be punished, when his own children are so visited and afflicted. If Gods own Children, who are as dear and near to him, as the *Apple of his eye*, or the *signet on his right hand*, suffer so many and grievous afflictions here; what shall his adversaries suffer in *Hell*? undoubtedly, when the Patient is made whole, he shall be preserved; but the *Plaster* shall be thrown away: For as God doth turn evil to good to them that love him; so he turnes good to evil to those that hate him.

Again,

Again secondly, if the wicked are punished for doing wrong to the wicked, much more for wronging the just, and innocent: But wee have many examples of the former, as that of *Adonibezek*, who having cut off the *Thumbs* and great *Toes* of Seventy Kings that were wicked like himself, had also his his own *Thumbs* and *Toes* cut off; *Judg. 1. 7. 7.* And *Moad*, of whom the Lord saith, hee hath burnt the bones of the King of Edom into lime, therefore will I send a fire upon *Moad*, and it shall devour; &c. *Amos 2. 1, 2.* If the greater Serpent devours the less, there is a *Dragon* to devour him, therefore the enemies of Gods Church, have no hope to escape. The everlasting punishments of the ungodly are deferred, not remitted.

But all the evil thou doest to the godly, is with thy tongue?

Answer. That's bad enough, the Serpents *hissing* betrays his malice; and *Ismael's tongue* made him a Persecuter, as well as *Dory's hands*; hee did but *flout* Isaac, yet *Salut Paul* saith, hee persecuted him *Gal. 4. 29.* *Cham* onely scoft at *Noah*, yet it brought upon him his Fathers curse, and Gods woe that. The *Athenians* but scoft once at *Silla's wife*, and it had well nigh cost the razing of their City, he was so provoked with the indignity. And whatever thou conceivest of it, let this saith hee as far from my soul, as my soul from Hell. For assuredly, God will one day lay by you to scorn, for laughing his to scorn: and at last despise you, that have despised him in me.

CHAP. 35.

Other grounds of comfort to support a Christian in his sufferings,
And first, that God is specially present with his servants in
their afflictions, takes notice of their sufferings,
and allayes their grief.

THIS rub being removed, and the passage made clear, proceed wee to other grounds of comfort which the Word of God affords in this case, for the better upholding, and strenghtening of a weak Christian in his sufferings: Wherein, that wee may not exceed, I will select out onely five, because instructions, if they exceed, are wont, like nails, to drive out one another.

First, wee shall beat the Cross with the more patience and comfort; if wee consider, that God is specially present with his servants in their afflictions; takes notice of their sufferings, and allays their grief. The troubles of a Christian are very great for number, variety, and bitterness; yet there is one ingredient that sweetens them all, the promise of God, I will bee with thee in trouble, and deliver thee, *Psal. 91. 15.* And thou shalt not bee tempted above thy strength, *1 Cor. 10. 13.* Again, fear not; for when thou passest through the water, I will bee with thee; and through the floods, that they do not over-flow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not bee burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee, *Isa. 43. 1, 2.* Lo, here are promises like Flaggons of wine, to comfort the distressed soul. Wherefore as *Caesar* said to the trembling *Marriner*, Bee

not afraid; for thou carriest *Caſar*; ſo, O Chriſtian! bee not afraid, for hee that is in thee, for thee; with thee; that guides thee, that will ſave thee, is the invincible King *Jehova*. And upon this ground *David* was ſo comforted and reſreſhed in his ſoul, *Pſal.* 94. 19. that hee was able to ſay, *Though I ſhould walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil: Why? For thou art with mee; thy Rod and thy Staffe ſhall comfort mee,* *Pſal.* 23. 4. Yea, our Enemies can no ſooner aſſault us with their tongues, but God comes in to our reſcue. If yee bee railed upon for the name of Chriſt; (ſaith *Saint Peter*) bleſſed are yee, for the Spirit of God reſteth upon you, *1 Pet.* 4. 14. God is never ſo much enjoyed of us, as when we are in the deep, with *David*, *Pſal.* 130. 1. and when wee are worſt of all beſtead with *Jehoſaphat*, *2 Chron.* 20. 13. When did *Jacob* ſee a Viſion of Angels? but when hee fled for his life, making the gold earth his bed, and a ſtone his pillow; or when was his heart ſo full of joy, as now that his head lay hardeſt? When was *Paul* wrapp'd into the third heaven to hear words from Chriſt not fit to bee uttered, *2 Cor.* 12. 2. 4. but as ſome of the learned conceive, when hee was bereaved of his ſight. *Stephen* ſaw great happineſſe by Chriſt, in his peace: but under that ſhower of ſtones, hee ſaw heaven it ſelf open, *Act.* 7. When wee are ſlain all the day long for his ſake, with the *Martyrs*, then wee are given to ſee him with our eyes, as *Job* did, who till that time had onely heard of him by the hearing of the ear. Then wee come to know that the Lord, hee is God, with *Manaſſes* *2 Chron.* 33. 13. and that he is our hope and ſtrength and reſuge, and a very preſent help in troubles, ready to bee ſound of all that ſeek to him, *2 Chron.* 15. 4. 15. *Pſal.* 9. 9, 10, and 46. 1.

The *Iſraelites* never ſared ſo well, as when they lived at Gods immediate ſiading, and at night expected their morrowes break-faſt from the clouds: When they did daily aſk and daily receive, their daily bread. Yea, even when they were wandering in a ſorlorn wilderneſſe, how did God as it were attend upon them in their diſtreſſe, to ſupply their wants? They have no guide, therefore God himſelf goes before them in a pillar of fire; they have no ſhelter, the Lord ſpreads a Cloud over them for a Canopy; are they at a ſtand, and want way; the Sea ſhall part and give them paſſage; do they lack bread? Heaven it ſelf ſhall power down the food of Angels; have they no meat to their bread? a wind ſhall ſend them innumerable Quails; do they yet want drink, behold a hard rock ſmitten with a little wand, ſhall powr them out water in abundance; have they no ſupply of Apparell, their Garments ſhall not wax old on their backs; bee their Enemies too ſtrong for them for want of Engines, the Walls of *Jeriſcho* ſhall fall down before them; are their enemies yet too many and potent, hail-ſtormes ſhall fall and brain them: Lamps, Pitchers, and Dreams ſhall get them Victory, the Sun ſhall ſtand ſtill in *Gibeon*, and the Moon in the valley of *Ajalon*: lack they yet a Land to inhabite, the Lord will caſt out all the inhabitants, and give them a Land which flows with milk and honey, &c. Afflictions have this advantage, that they occaſion God to ſhew that mercy to us, whereof the proſperous are uncapable; as wee further ſee

See in Hagar, Gen. 21. 17, 18, 19. And Manoah's Wife, Judg. 13. 3. to whom the Angel of the Covenant had not been sent, if they had not been in distress.

It would not become a mother to bee so indulgent to an healthfull child, as to a sick : and indeed some have found their outward castigations to sweetened with the inward consolations of Gods Spirit, that they have sonnd and confessed their receipts of joy and comfort, to bee an hundred fold more than their payments, even in this present life according to that promise of our Saviour, Mark. 10. 29, 30. So that a Christian is still a gainer in all his losses ; yea, hee gains by his losses.

Now if wee could but remember and lay to heart these promises, thus back'd with examples ; when wee feel the greatest assaults or pangs, how could wee want courage ? But alas, most of us are like the Prophets servant, 2 KIng. 6. who saw his foes, but not his friends : we are like Josephs brethren, who saw him, conversed with him, were fed by him, yet knew him not. Like Peter, who when the Angel brought him out of prison, and went before him ; wilt not that it was so, but thought hee saw a vision, Act. 12. 9. Christ at his Resurrection was so changed, that his own Disciples knew him not ; much more since his ascension may hee pass by us, as hee did by Job, Chap. 9. 11. or meet us as hee did Saul in the way to Damascus ; or walk and talk with us, as hee did with the two Disciples in the way to Emaus, Luk. 24. 16. or stand by us while wee are seeking him, as hee did by Mary in the Garden, Joh. 20. 14. and yet wee bee ignorant that it is hee. Yea, hee may bee in us by his spirit ; even whilst wee feel him not. Jacob saw him both asleep and awake, yet (saith hee) the Lord was in this place, and I was not aware of it, Gen. 28. 16. at least wee are apt to thinke, that God is removed from us, when wee any way suffer calamity ; as the Israelites do but want water, and presently they cry, Is the Lord among us, or no ? Exod. 17. 7. as if God could not bee with them, and they a thurst ; either hee must humour carnall minds, or bee distrusted.

But both his presence and love, is the same in adversity, as it is in prosperity ; our sense onely makes the difference, even as a Church, Castle, or Town, is unmoveable, and keepeth one place ; though to us it may seem sometime on our right hand, other while on our left : as wee change our standing, sitting, or walking. Yet if some unusuall crosses disturb our peace, presently there breaks out a voice mix'd with mourning, and despair, God hath forsaken us. It was a common complaint with David, The Lord hath forsaken us ; thou hast cast off, and abhorred us : why hast thou forsaken mee &c. ? Yea, the onely Son of God came to this, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken mee ? Yet consider, did God forsake either of them ? hee might bee angry with David, more angry with Christ, for the sins of all the world : and in their present sense, that anger might work in them an apprehension of his forsaking them : but hee did not forsake them, nor will hee forsake thee, if thou dost not first forsake him. Thou maist think so, but God will not do so ; but in the mean time, how

can this bee well taken? wee see our wretchedness, wee do not see our blessedness: No talk of his presence, of his absence wee complain. Our cowardly spirits give him for quite gone; yet hee is not far from every one of us, *Act. 17. 27.* Yea, this confession could *Seneca* make, (but like a Divine) God is near unto thee, hee is with thee, hee is within thee: and surely if hee had not been with these *Israelites*, they had not lived; if hee had been in them, they had not murmured. Wee can think him absent in our want, and cannot see him absent in our sin; yet, wickedness, not affliction, argues him gone: yea, hee is then most present, when hee most chastiseth; for as the sufferings of *Christ* abound in us, so our consolations abound through *Christ*, *2 Cor. 1. 5.*

Again, God may bee present with us, and yet wee not bee pleased; as the *Israelites* repined for a King, when the Lord was their King: or *Christ* may bee with us, and yet wee want something that wee desire. *Christ* was in the Ship, and yet (say the Apostles) wee have no bread. *Jesus* was at the Marriage, yet saith his Mother, they have no wine, *Joh. 2. 3.* Wee may want Bread and wine, and yet have *Christ's* company: but if food fail, it is because *Manna* is to come; if wine bee absent, yet grace and salvation is present: if God takes away flesh, and gives *Manna*; deny Sun and Moon, and gives himself; hee doth us no wrong.

Now why doth God by his promise eye himself to bee present with us; more especially in affliction? but that hee may resist our enemies, sustain us when wee faint, and crown us when wee overcome; but that hee may bee exact in taking notice of our particular sufferings, and as *David* saith, Count our waddings, put our tears into his bottle, and enter all into his Register, *Psal. 56. 8. 9.* All our afflictions are more noted by that God that sends them, than of the patient that suffers them; every pang, and stitch, and gird, is first felt of him that sends it; could wee bee miserable unseen, wee had reason to bee heartlesse: but how can it bee but lesse possible to indure any thing that hee knows not, than that hee inflicted not? As hee said to *Manoah* by an Angell, Thou art barren, *Judg. 13. 3.* so hee saith to one, thou art sick, to another, thou art poor, to a third, thou art defamed; thou art oppressed to another; that all-seeing eye takes notice from heaven of every mans condition, no lesse than if hee should send an Angell to tell us hee knew it: and his knowledge compared with his mercy, is the just comfort of all our sufferings. O God! wee are many times miserable, and feel it not; thou knowest even those sorrows which we might have, thou knowest what thou hast done, do what thou pleasest.

CHAP. 36.

That all afflictions, from the least to the greatest, do come to pass, not by accident, chance or fortune, but by the especial providence of God.

Section 1.

WE shall bear the cross with more patience and comfort. If wee consider, that all afflictions, from the least to the greatest, do come to pass, not by accident, chance, or fortune, but by the speciall providence of God; who not onely decreeth and fore-appointeth every particular cross, Eccles. 3. 1. Rom. 8. 18. 29, but even effecteth them, and brings them into execution, as they are crosses, corrections, trialls, and chastisements; Isa. 45. 7. Amos 3. 6. and also ordereth and disposeth them; that is, limiteth and appointeth the beginning, the end, the measure, the quality, and the continuance thereof: yea, hee ordereth them to their right ends; namely, his own glory, the good of his servants, and the benefit of his Church: Jer. 30. 11. Gen. 50. 19, 20. 2 Sam. 16. 10. Psal. 39. 9. God useth them but as instruments, wherewith to Work his good pleasure upon us. As what are our enemies, but God's Axes to cut us down, not for the fire, but for the building: God's Masons to hew us here in the Mountain, that wee may bee as the polished corner stones of the Temple, Psal. 144. 12. Or admit the Mason pulls down the House, it is not with an intent to destroy it, but to re-edifie it; and raise it up again in better form and fashion. Gods scullions to scowre up the vessell of his House, that they may bee meet for the Masters use.

If then they bee but as instruments, and tools in the hand of the workman; wee must not so much look to the instrument, as to the Author, Gen. 45. 5. and 50. 20. Well may the Priests of the Philistines doubt whether their plague bee from God, or by fortune, 1 Sam. 6. 2, 9. but let a Joseph bee sold into Egypt, he will say to his enemies, Yee sent not mee hither, but God; when yee thought evil against mee, God disposed it to good, that bee might bring to pass as it is this day; and save much people alive: Or let a David bee raised upon by any cursed Stones, hee will answer, Let him alone, for hee curseth, even because the Lord hath bid him curse David: woe dare then say, wherefore hast thou done so? 2 Sam. 16. 10. Or let a Michu bee trodden upon, and insulted over by his enemies, his answer will bee no other than this. I will bear the wrath of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, untill he plead my cause, and execute judgment for mee: Michu 7. 9. The believer that is conversant in God's book, knows that his adversaries are in the hands of God, as a hammer, ax, or rod, in the hand of a smiter; and therefore as the hammer, ax, or rod, of it self can do nothing, any further than the force of the hand using it, gives strength unto it: so no more can they do any thing at all unto him, further than it is given them from above; as our Saviour told Pilate: Job. 12. 11. See

this in some examples; you have *Laban* following *Jacob* with one troop, *Esau* meeting him with another, both with hostile intentions; both go on till the uttermost point of their execution, both are prevented ere the execution: for stay but a while, and you shall see *Laban* leave him with a kiss, *Esau* meet him with a kiss; of the one hee hath an oath, tears of the other, peace with both. • God makes fools of the enemies of his Church, hee lets them proceed that they may bee frustrate; and when they are gone to the uttermost reach of their feather, hee pulls them back to the stake with shame. Again, you have *Senacherib* let loose upon *Hezekiah* and his people, who insults over them intolerably: 2 Kings 18. Oh! the lamentable and (in sight) desperate condition of distressed *Jerusalem*; wealth it had none, strength it had but a little, all the countrey round about was subdued unto the *Affyrian*: that proud victor hath begirt the walls of it with an innumerable army, scorning that such a shovell-full of earth should stand out but one day: yet poor *Jerusalem* stands alone, block'd up with a world of enemies, beleys, friendles, comfortles, looking for the worst of an hostile fury; and on a sudden, before an Arrow is shot into the City, a hundred fourscore and five thousand of their enemies were slain, and the rest run away, 2 Kings 19. 35, 36. God laughs in heaven at the plots of Tyrants, and befools them in their deepest projects. If hee undertake to protect a people, in vain shall earth, and hell conspire against them. Nothing can bee accomplished in the Lower House of this world, but first it is decreed in the Upper Court of heaven; as for example, what did the Jews ever do to our Saviour Christ, that was not first both decreed by the Father of Spirits, and registered in the Scriptures for our notice and comfort? They could not so much as throw the Dice for his Coat, but it was prophesied: Psal. 22. 18. and in Psal. 69. 21. It is fore-told that they should give him gall in his meat, and in his thirst, vinegar to drink; the very quality and kind of his drink is prophesied: yea, his face could not be spit upon without a prophesie; those filthy excrements of his enemies fell not upon his face, without God's decree, and the Prophets relation: Isa. 50. 6. Yea, let the Kings of the earth bee assembled, and the Rulers come together; Let *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate*, with the Gentiles and the people of *Israel*, gather themselves in one league against him, it is in vain; for they can do nothing, but what the hand of God and his Counsell hath before determined to bee done: as *Peter* and *John* affirmed to the rest of the Disciples, for their better confirmation and comfort: Act. 4. 26. to 29. No, notwithstanding the Devill raged, the Pharisees stormed, *Herod* and *Pilate* vexed, *Caiaphas* prophesied, all combined, and often sought to take him: yet no man laid hands on him (untill his hour was come that God had appointed): so that by all their plots, they were never able to do him any more hurt, than onely to show their teeth, Joh. 7. 30. If wee are in league with God, wee need not fear the greatest of men.

Indeed, it was *Pilate* brag to Christ, knowest thou not that I have power to crucifie thee? Joh. 19. 10. And *Labans* to *Jacob*, Gen. 31. 29. I am able to do you hurt; but they were vain cracks: for doth not *Pharaohs*

raobs overthrow tell all boasting Champions; that an Host is nothing without the God of Hosts. Yea, Satan himself was fain to say unto God in Job's case, stretch out now thine hand, &c. Job 1. 11. and 2. 5. Tiberius Themistocles once said of his son; this boy can do more than any man in all Greece: for the Athenians command the Grecians, and I command the Athenians, and my wife commands mee, and my son commands my wife: so the Churches adversaries in some places, may boast what their Father the Devill can do: for hee commands the Pope, and the Pope commands the Jesuites, and the Jesuites command such a King, or Emperour, Rev. 17. ver. 12. 13. and that Emperour, or King, commands his Officers of State; and they command the common people. And yet to speak rightly, even all these can do just nothing of themselves, for hee that sits in the heavens laughing them to scorn, commands all.

Now it must needs comfort and support us exceedingly, if in all cases wee do but duly consider, that inequality is the ground of order, that superior causes guide the subordinate, that this sublunary Globe depends on the celestially; as the lesser wheels in a Clock do on the great one, which I finde thus expressed;

*As in a Clock one motion doth convey,
And carry diverse wheels a severall way;
Yet altogether by the great wheels force,
Direct the hand unto his proper course.*

who is hee that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not? Lamenta. 3. 37. Suppose the Legions of bell should combine with the Potentates of the earth to do their worst, they are all nothing without God: as in Arithmetick, put never so many Cyphers together, one before another, and they make nothing; but let one figure bee added, it makes them infinite. So is it with men and Devills; if God bee not with them, they are all but Cyphers: And yet for the praise of his glory, and the good of his Church, these enemies of his, whether they rise or sit still, shall by an insensible ordination performe that will of the Almighty, which they least think of, and most oppose: The inhabitants of Jerusalem, and their Rulers, (because they knew him not, nor yet the words of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath day) have fulfilled them in condemning him, Act. 13. 27. so that as Saint Austin speaks, by resisting the will of God, they do fulfill it: and his will is done by and upon them, even in that they do against his will.

That even Satan himself is limited, and can go no further than his chain will reach, wee may see Rev. 10. 2. More particularly; hee could not touch so much as Job's body or substance, no nor one of his servants, nor one limb of their bodies, nor one hair of their heads, nor one beast of their herds, but hee must first beg leave of God, Job 2. 6. Nay Satan is so far from having power over us living, that hee cannot touch our bodies being dead; yea, hee cannot find them when God will cancel them, (witness the body of Moses): and I doubt not, but as the Angels did wait at

the Sepulchre of their and our Lord: so for his sake, they also watch over our graves: he could not seduce a false prophet, nor enter into a Hog without licence; the whole Legion sue to Christ for a sufferance, not daring other than to grant, that without his permission they could not hurt a very Swine.

And when he hath leave from God, what can hee do? hee cannot go one hairs breadth beyond his commission: being permitted, hee could bring Christ himself, and set him on the Pinnacle of the Temple, but hee could not throw him down; which even a little child might have done with permission. As the Lyon, 1 King. 13, killed the Prophet, but neither touched the Ass whereon hee roode, nor yet the dead carcass contrary to his nature.

True Satan could boast even to Christ himself, that all the world was his, and all the Kingdoms thereof, but when it came to the push, he could not enter into a very Hog, without asking him leave, and having leave given him, hee presently carryed the whole heard headlong into the Sea: Why did hee not so to the man possessed? no thanks to him, hee had leave for the one, not so for the other, and therefore a whole Legion of them were not able to destroy one poor simple man, Matth. 8. ver. 31. 32.

So that all our enemies are curbed and restrained by the divine providence of our heavenly Father: Satan may bee his Executioner, but God is the Judge, and the Executioner cannot lay on a stroke more than the Judge appoints.

I confess Satan is so strong comparatively, and withall so crafty and malicious, that wee may with reverence and love, wonder at the mercy of God in our delivery: But this is our comfort, first, that Spirit (as wee have shew'd) can do nothing without the God of Spirits. Secondly, wee have the Angels aid, as the Prophet Elisha against that bloody King, 2 King. 6. 17. Lot against the Sodomites, Gen. 19. 10. Jacob against the fear of Esau, Gen. 32. ver. 24. 28. Hecuba against Senacherib, Isa. 37. 36. and England against that invincible Navie of the Spaniards in Eighty eight. True, they appear not ordinarily, what then? no more do the evil Angels, but the Word of God assures us it is so, the Angel of the Lord pitcheth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them, Psal. 34. 7. And do but thou get spirituall eyes, whereby thou may'st see, as with Moses, the invisible God, so the invisible Angels: do but pray as Elisha for his servant, that thine eyes may bee opened, and then thou shalt see more with thee, than against thee 2 King. 6. 16. 17.

Yea, had wicked men their eyes opened, as Satan once had, they would at every turn see an Angel stand in their way, ready to resist what they go about, as hee did: for this is one of the noble imployments of those glorious spirits, to give a strong, though invisible opposition to lewd enterprises: Many a treacherous act have they hindred, without the knowledge of the Traytor. Yea, O! God, many are the dangers which wee see, and fear; innumerable, those wee neither see nor fear,
These

Therefore to take away all attribution to our selves, even when wee know not thou dost deliver us.

Now if it bee fearfull to think how great things evill spirits can do with permission; it is comfortable so think how they can do nothing without permission: for if God must give him leave, hee will never give him leave to do any harm to his chosen, hee will never give him leave to do the least hurt to our souls. Now as by way of concession, every greater includes the lesse, hee that can lift a Talent, can easily lift a Pound; so by way of deniall, every greater excludes the lesse. If Satan himself cannot hurt us, much lesse his instruments, weak men: but for proof of this, see also an instance or two: that a Sparrow cannot fall to the ground without our heavenly Father; and that without leave from him, our enemies cannot diminish one hair of our heads; wee have our Saviour's expresse testimony, Matth. 10. 29. 30. Let the Powder-Trustors plot and contrive the ruine of our state never so cunningly and close, let them go on to the utmost, (as there wanted nothing but an actor to bring on that Catholick dooms-day) yet before the match could bee brought to the Powder, their artificiall fire-works were discovered, their profession, prodition, depredation, all disclosed, and seasonably returned on their own heads: And the like of their invincible Navie. And of Pope Alexander the sixth, who prepared a feast for diverse Cardinalls and Senators, purposing to poyson them: but by the providence of God, they escaped; and hee alone was poysoned. Let Jezebel fret her heart out, and swear by her gods, that Eliab shall die, yet liest shall bee frustrate; Eliab shall bee safe. Let the red Dragon spout forth floods of venom against the Church, the Church shall have wings given her to flie away, she shall be delivered, Rev. 12. Let the Scribes and Pharisees, with their many false witnesses accuse Christ never so, yet in spite of malice, innocency shall find abbettors: and rather than hee shall want witnesses, the mouth of Prate shall bee opened to his justification. Yea, let Jonas through frailty run away from the execution and embassage of Gods charge, and thereupon bee cast into the Sea, though the waves require him of the Ship, and the Fish require him of the waves, yet the Lord will require him of the Fish: even the Sea, and the Fish, had as great a charge for the Prophet, as the Prophet had a charge for Nineveh: for this is a sure rule, if in case God gives any of the creatures leave to afflict us, yet hee will be sure to lay no more upon us than we are able, or he will make us able to bear: yea, than shall make for our good, and his glory. Hee hath a provident care over all the Creatures, even Beasts and Plants: and certainly wee are more precious than Fowls and Flowers; yet the Lord cares for them. Will the House-holder take care to water the herbs of his Garden, or to fodder his Cattell, and suffer his Men and Maids to famish through hunger and thirst? Or will hee provide for his Men and Maids, and let his own children starve? Surely, if a man provide not for his own, hee hath denied the faith, and is worse than an Infidell: 1 Tim. 5. 8. Far bee it then from the great House-holder, and Judge of all the earth, not to provide for his dear Children and Servants, what shall bee most necessary for

- for them indeed wee may fear our own flesh, as Saint Paul did; but God is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above our strength, but will even give the issue with the temptation, and in the mean time support us with his grace, 2 Cor. 12. 9. You have an excellent place to this purpose, Jer. 15. 20, 21.

Section. 2.

Objection, But wee see by experience, that God gives wicked men power often times to take away the very lives of the godly.

Answer, What then? If wee lose the lives of our bodies, it is, that wee may save the lives of our souls; and attain the greater degree of glory, Luk. 9. 24. and so wee are made gainers even by that loss. Now if God takes away temporall, and gives eternall life for it, there is no hurt done us: hee that promisseth ten pieces of silver, and gives ten pieces of gold, breaks no promise. Peace bee unto this house, was the Apostles salutation, but it was not meant of an outward peace with men of the world: and Christ saith, you shall have rest, Matth. 11. 28. but it is rest unto your souls. Again, thou hast merited a three-fold death: if thou be'st freed from the two worser, Spirituall, and eternall; and God deal favourably with thee touching thy naturall death, hee is mercifull: if not, thou must not think him unjust. Though the Devill and the world can hurt us, as well as other men, in our outward and bodily estates: as the Devill had power over Job in his ulcers, over his children in their death, over Mary Magdalen that was possessed, and over that daughter of Abrahams, Luk. 13. whom hee kept bound 18. years, ver. 16. yet they can do us no hurt, nor indanger our souls; they shall lose nothing but their dross, as in Zachary 13. 9. Isa. 12. Let them sluice out our blood, our souls they cannot so much as strike; let wild beasts tear the body from the soul, yet neither body, nor soul are thereby severed from Christ. Yea, they can neither deprive us of our Spirituall treasure here, nor eternall hereafter; which makes our Saviour say, Fear yee not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell, Matth. 10. 28. The body is but the Bark, Cabinet, Case, or Instrument, of the soul; and say it falls in pieces, there is but a pitcher broken; the soul a glorious Ruby, held more fit to bee set in the crown of glory, than here to bee troden under foot by dirty swine; and therefore so soon as separated, the Angels convey her hence to the place of everlasting bliss. Alas, what can they do? they cannot separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8. 38, 39. Yea, they are so far from doing us harm, as that contrariwise wee are much the better for them; In all these these things wee are more than conquerours, through him that loved us; ver. 37. Whatsoever then becoms of goods, or lives, happy are wee so long as (like wise Souldiers) wee guard the vitall parts, while the soul is kept sound from impatience, from distrust, &c. Our enemie may afflict us, hee cannot hurt us.

Object.

Objection. Nevertheless, that which I suffer, is exceeding grievous.

Answer. Not so grievous as it might have been, for hee that hath afflicted thee for a time, could have held thee longer; hee that toucheth thee in part, could have stricken thee in whole; hee that laid this upon thy body, hath power to lay a greater Rod both upon thy body and soul. Again, there is no chastisement not grievous; the bone that was dis-jointed, cannot bee set right without pain; no potion can cure us, if it work not; and it works not, except it make us sick: Nay, my very disease is not so painfull for the time, as my remedy: how doth it turn the stomach, and wring the In trails, and work a worse distemper than that whereof I formerly complained? neither could it bee so wholesome, if it were less unpleasing, neither could it make mee whole, if it did not first make mee sick. But wee are contented with that sickness which is the way to health. There is a vexation without hurt, such is this: wee are afflicted, not over-pressed: needy, not desperate: persecuted, not forsaken: cast down, but perish not, how should wee? when all the evill in a City, comes from the providence of a good God, which can neither bee impotent, nor unmercifull? It is the Lord, let him do what hee will. Woe worth us! if evils could come by chance, or were let loose to light where they list; now they are over-ruled, wee are safe. In the name of God then, let not the tall stature of the Anakims, nor the combination of the Edomites, nor the politicke counsels of all the Achitopels and Machivillians, nor the proud looks nor the big words of all the Amarijahs, combining themselves together, deter or dismay you. Let not the over-topping growth of the tops of Zerviah seem too hard for you; for God is infinitely more strong and mighty to save us, than all our enemies are to destroy us: and he hath his Oar in their Boat, he hath a speccial stroke in all actions whatsoever, and can easily over-reach, and make sturk fools of the wisest; by making their own counsels and endeavours like Hushai's, to overthrow those intentions which they seem to support.

As touching the continuance of afflictions, God so ordereth and tempereth the same, in his merciful wisdom; that either they be tolerable, or short; either our sorrows shall not be violent, or they shal not last; if they be not light, they shal not be long; grievous and sore trialls last but for a season, 1 Pet. 1. 6. A little while, Job. 16. 16. Yea, but a moment, 2 Cor. 4. 17. Hee endureth but a while in his anger, (saith the Psalmist) but in his favour is life; weeping may abide for a night, but joy cometh in the morning, Psal. 30. 5. And this had hee good experience of; for if we mark it, all those Psalms whose first lines contain sighs and broken complaints, do end with delight and contentment; he began them in fear, but they end in joy: you shal see terrible anguish sitting in the door, irremediable sorrow looking in at the window, despair bordering in the margin, and offering to creep into the text; yet after a sharp conflict, nothing appears but joy and comfort. God loves to send relief, when wee least look for it; as Elisha sent to the King of Israel, when he was rending his cloaths, 2 Kings 5. 8. Hear what the Lord thy Redeemer saith by Isaiab, For a moment in mine anger, I hid my face from thee for a little

a little season, but with everlasting mercy have I had compassion on thee: *Isa. 54. 8.* It is but a little, for a moment that his anger lasts, his mercy is everlasting: and I hid my face, never turn'd my heart from thee: *Joseph* when hee lay down to sleep, was full of care about his Wives being with child; *Matt. 1. 20.* but hee awakned well satisfied: *ver. 24.* To day a measure of fine flower, is lower rated in *Samarit*, than yesterday of dung. Although *Christ's Star* left the wise-men for a time, yet instantly it appeared again, and forsook them not till they had found *Christ*; which was the mark they aimed at, *Matt. 2. 9.* Afflictions are like running waters, which make many grounds fruitful, but carry with none of them. Yea, it is a rule in nature, that violent things cannot last long: The Philosophers could observe, that no motion violent is wont to bee permanent; and *Seneca* concludes, That if the sickness bee tedious and lasting, the pain is tolerable; but if violent, short, and so of spirituall temptations, the which were so vehement upon *Luther*, that the very venom of them drank up his spirits; and his body seemed dead; so that neither speech, sense, blood, or heat, appeared in him; but this sharp fit lasted but for one day: so if wee suffer much, it shall not bee long; if wee suffer long, it shall not bee much. Some misery is like a Consumption, gentle, but of long continuance; other like a Fever, violent, but soon over. If our sorrows be long, they are the lighter; if sharper, the shorter. The sharp North-East wind (saith the Astronomer) never lasteth three days, and thunder, the more violent the less permanent. Wherefore cheer up thou drooping soul, if the Sun of comfort bee for the present clouded; it will ere long shine forth bright again: if now with the Moon thou art in the wane, stay but a little, thou shalt as much increase, for as days succeed nights, Summer, Winter, and rest travell so undoubtedly, joy shall succeed, and exceed thy sorrow. Thy grief shall dissolve, or bee dissolved; yea, it is in some measure dissolved by hope for the present. The Portugals will rejoyce in foul weather why? because they know, fair will follow; and so may the believer, in his greatest exigents; because God will shortly tread *Satan* under our feet, *Rom. 16. 20.* Here also the distressed soul may raise comfort to himself out of former experience; who is hee that hath not been delivered out of some miserable exigent? which if thou hast, thou maist well say unto God with the Psalmist, Thou hast shewed mee great troubles and adversities, but thou wilt return and revive mee, and wilt come again, and take mee up from the depth of the earth, and comfort mee *Psal. 71. 20. 21.* For God's former actions are patterns of his future; hee teacheth you what hee will do, by what he hath done: and nothing more raiseth up the heart in present affliction, than the recognition of favours, or wonders passed, the which hath found God present in one extremity, may trust him in the next. Every sensible favour of the Almighty, invites both his gifts and our trust.

Objection. But thou wilt say with the Psalmist, thine enemies have long prevailed against thee, and God seemeth altogether to hide his face, and to have cleave forgotten thee; and so thou fearest hee will for ever, *Psal. 13. 1, 2.*

Answer.

Answer. It is but so in thy apprehension, as it was with him; *Gods deliverance* may over-stay thy expectation, it cannot, the due period of his own counsels: for know first, that *Gods works* are not to bee judged of, untill the fifth act. The case deplorable and desperate in outward appearance, may with one smile from heaven find a blessed issue: *Dorham* is besieged, and the *Prophets* servant distressed, they are in a pious case (as they think); yet a very apparition in the clouds shall secure them: not a squadron shall bee raised, and yet the enemy is surprised: *2 Kings 8.* here was no slackness. The *Midianites* invade *Israel*, and are suddenly confounded by a dream, *Judg. 7.* *Mistress Honeywood*, that Religious Gentlewoman, famous for her virtues, after shee had been distressed in her mind thirty years, without feeling the least comfort, not being able to hold out any longer, (as a wounded spirit who can bear)? *Ruog* a Venice-glass against the ground, and said to a grave Divine that sought to comfort her, *I am as sure to bee damned, as this glass is to bee broken*; but what followed? the glass was not broken, but rebounded and stood upright: at the sight whereof, shee was so confirmed, that ever after to her dying day, shee lived most comfortably: much like that of *Apellas*, who striving to paint a drop of foam falling from a Horse mouth, after long study how to express it, even despairing, timg away his Pencil, and that throw did it. How opportunely doth God provide succours to our distressed? It is his glory to help at a pinch, to begin where wee have given over; that our relief might bee so much the more welcome, by how much it is less looked for: superfluous aid can neither bee heartily desired, nor earnestly looked for, nor thankfully received from the hands of mercy. Besides our infirmities best sets off the glory of his strength, *1 Cor. 12. 9.* *Spiritual* consolations are commonly late and suddain; long before they come, and speedy when they do come, even preventing expectation: and our last conflicts have wont ever to be the forest, as when after some dripping rain, it powres down most vehemently, wee think the weather is changing. When hee means to ease us of our burthen, hee seems to lay on heavier; wherefore trust in God killing, and love God chiding, it is a good signe of our recovery.

Section 3.

Again, in the next place thou must know, that mans extremity is Gods opportunity; well may hee so bear, so long as wee have have any thing else to rely upon; but wee are sure to find him in our greatest exigents, who loves to give comfort to those that are forsaken of their hopes, as abundance of examples witness. When had the *Children of Israel* the greatest victories, but when they feared most to bee overcome? *2 King. 19. 35. Exod. 14. ver. 28, 29.* When was *Hagar* comforted of the Angel, but when her child was neer famished, and shee had cast it under a Tree for dead? *Gen. 21. 15. to 18.* When was *Elisab* comforted and relieved by an Angel, with a Cake baked on the coals; and a Cruise of water, but when hee was utterly for-

forſaken of his hopes? 1 Kings 19. 4. to 7. When was the *Sareptan* relieved? it was high time for the *Prophet* to viſit her: poor ſoul ſhee was now making her laſt meal: after one mean morſell, ſhee was yielding her ſelf over to death. As long as *Egypt's flower* laſted, *Manra* was not rained. When did God answer the hopes of *Sarah*, *Rebeccah*, *Rachel*, the wife of *Manoah*, and *Elisabeth*, touching their long and much deſired iſſues? but when they were barren, and paſt hope of children, by reaſon of age, *Gen.* 18. *Judges* 13, *Luke* 1. 6. 7. When did our Saviour heal the woman of her bloody iſſue? but after the *Phyſitians* had given her over, and ſhee becoming much worſe, had given them over, when ſhee had ſpent all ſhee had upon them: for to mend the matter, poverty, which is another diſeaſe was ſuper-added, to make her compleatly miſerable. When mans help fails, then Gods begins. When did *Moses* find ſuccour, but when his Mother could no longer hide him, and hee was put into the River among the *Bull-ruſhes*? ſhee would have given all ſhee was worth to ſave him, and now ſhee hath wages to nurſe him: ſhee doth but change the name of mother into nurſe, and ſhee hath her ſon without fear, not without great reward. When *Iſrael* was in ſo hard a ſtraight, as either to bee drowned in the Sea, or ſlain by the Sword; how miraculoſly did God provide an evaſion by dividing the waters? When *Rochel*, like *Samaria*, had a ſtrong enemy without, and a ſore famine within; how miraculoſly did God provide an evaſion, by making the tyde their Purveyor, to bring them in an Ocean of ſheſh? the like of which was never known before, nor ſince. Wee read how *Merline*, during the *Maſſacre* at *Paris*, was for a fortnight together, nourished with one egge a day, laid by a hen, that came conſtantly to a bay-window, where hee lay hid in that danger, When the *Engliſh* had left *Calais*, and the *Spainard* was again repoſſeſt of it; by ſome neglect or overſight, there was an *Engliſh man* left behinde: but how did God provide for his eſcape? it's worth the remembring, hee was no ſooner crept into a hole under a pair of ſtairs, but inſtantly a Spider weaves a web over the hole, and this diverted them; for when one of them ſaid, here is ſurely ſome of them hid, another replies, What a fool art thou, doeſt thou not ſee, it's covered with a firm cob-web? and ſo paſt him, that in the night hee aſcaped. O! Saviour, our extremities are the ſeaſons of thy aid: even when *Faux* was giving fire to the match, that ſhould have given fire to the Powder, which ſhould have blown up Men and Monuments, even the whole State together; thou that never ſleepeſt didſt prevent him, and diſcloſe the whole deſign: yea, thou didſt turn our intended Funerall into a Feſtivall. And why doth the goodneſs of our God pick out the moſt needfull times for our relief and comfort? but becauſe our extremities drive us to him that is omnipotent; there is no fear, no danger, but in our own inſenſibility: but becauſe when wee are forſaken of all ſuccours and hopes; wee are fitteſt for his redreſs, and never are wee nearer to help: than when wee deſpair of help; but becauſe our extremities give him the moſt glory, and our comfort is the greater, when the deliverance is ſeen before it is expected. His wiſdom knows when aid will bee moſt ſeaſonable; moſt wel-

come : which hee then loves to give, when hee finds us left of all other props. That mercifull hand is reserved for a *dead list*, and then hee saith us not ; as when *Abraham* had given *Isaac*, and *Isaac* had given himself for dead ; then God interposeth himself ; When the *knife* is falling upon his *throat*, then, then comes the deliverance by an *Angell*, calling, *forbidding*, commending him. When things are desperate, then look most for God's help ; for *then is the time*, *Psal.* 119. 126. *Isa.* 33. 9. 10.

And indeed, our *faith* is most commendable in the *last* act ; it is no praise to *hold out* untill wee bee hard driven, but when wee are forsaken of *means*, then to live by *faith* in our God, is thought worthy of a *Crown*. O ! wretched *Saul*, hadst thou held out never so little longer without offering, and without distrust, *Samuel* had come, and thou hadst kept the favour of God, whereas now for thy unbelief, thou art cast off for ever, 1 *Sam.* 13. 10. to 15. To shut up all in a word, were thy soul in such a straight, as *Israel* was between the *Red Sea* and the *Egyptians* ; the *spirits of vengeance*, (like those enemies) pursuing thee behind ; *Hell* and death (like that *Red Sea*) ready to engulf thee before ; yet would I speak to thee in the confidence of *Moses*, *Exod.* 14. ver. 13. *Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord*. Thy Word O ! God, made all, thy Word shall repair all : hence all yee diffident fears, hee whom I trust is omnipotent

Again Secondly, thou must know that God in his wisdom hath set down a certain period of time, within which hee will exercise his children more or less ; and at the end whereof, and not before, hee will relieve and comfort them again. As wee may perceive by *Eccles.* 3. 1. *Alt.* 7. 25. *Exod.* 12. 41. *Gen.* 15. 13. *Dan.* 12. 1. 4. 11. *Jer.* 25. 11. *Gen.* 6. 3. Four hundred years hee appointed to *Abraham* and his seed, that they should bee Sojourners in a strange land, where they should bee kept in bondage, and evill intreated, *Gen.* 15. At the end of which time, even the self same day, they returned from the land of *Egypt* : that was the precise time appointed, and the self same day it was accomplis'd ; and till then *Moses* undertook it in vain. Why were they so long kept from it ? the land was their own before, they were the right heirs to it, lineally descended from him who was the first possessor of it after the flood : God will do all in due time, that is, in his time, not in ours ; if at any time the Lord deliver us, it is more than hee owes us. Let him (saith Saint *Augustine*) choose his own opportunity, that so freely grants the mercy. Again, hee appointed that the *Jews* should serve the King of *Babylon* seventy years ; not a day, not an hour to bee abated, *Jer.* 25. 11. but at the end thereof, even that very night, *Dan.* 9. it was accomplished ; neither did *Daniel*, (who knew the determinate time) once pray for deliverance, till just upon the expiration. Thirty eight years hee appointed the sick man at *Bethesda's* Pool, *Joh.* 5. 5. Eighteen years to that daughter of *Abraham*, whom *Christ* loosed from her disease, *Luk.* 13. 16. Twelve years to the woman with the bloody issue, *Matth.* 9. 20. Three months to *Moses*, *Exod.* 2. 2. Ten days tribulation to the *Angell* of the Church of *Smyrna*, *Apocal.* 2. 10.

Thre

Three days plague to David, 2 Sam. 24. 13. Each of these groined for a time, under the like burden as thou doest; But when their time which God had appointed, was come, they were delivered from all their miseries, troubles, and calamities; and so likewise ere long, if thou wilt patiently tarry the Lord's leisure, thou shalt also bee delivered from thy affliction and sorrow, either in the Morning of thy trouble, with David, Psal. 30. 5. or at the Noon of thy life, with Job, Chap. 42. 10 to 17. or toward the Evening, with Mr Glover, that holy Martyr, who could have no comfortable feeling, till hee came to the sight of the stake: but then hee cryed out and clap'd his hands for joy to his friend, saying, O! Austin, hee is come, hee is come, meaning the feeling joy of faith, and the Holy Ghost: Acts and monuments, Fol. 1555. Or at night with Lazarus, at one hour or another thou art sure to bee delivered; as time will determine. Many were the troubles of Abraham, but the Lord delivered him out of all. Many were the troubles of David, but the Lord delivered him out of all. Many were the troubles of Joseph, but the Lord delivered him out of all. Many were the troubles of Job, but the Lord delivered him out of all: therefore hee can and will deliver thee out of all. But if hee do not, (saith Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego) yet wee will not do evill to escape danger; because Christ hath suffered more for us: therefore if I perish, I perish, saith Hester. Bee our troubles many in number, strange in nature, heavy in measure, much in burthen, and long in continuance; yet God's mercies are more numerous, his wisdom more wondrous, his power more miraculous; he will deliver us out of all: Many are the troubles of the righteous. Yea, hee riseth higher, and calls them millions, for so the words may bee rendered; but the Lord delivereth them out of all: Psal. 34. 19. How many? or how great soever they bee? or how long soever they continue? yet an end they shall all have: For the Lord either taketh troubles from them, or takes them from troubles, by receiving them into his heavenly rest; where they shall acknowledge, that God hath rewarded them as far beyond their expectation, as hee had formerly punished them less than they did deserve.

Objection Oh! but my condition is so desperate, and irrecoverable, that it's impossible I should ever get out of it.

Answer There is no impossibility (saith Ambrose) where God is pleased to give a dispensation: But bethink thy self, is it worse with thee than it was with those before-mentioned? and yet they were delivered; Or is thy case worse than that of Jonas in the Sea, yea, in the whales belly? and yet hee was delivered: Worse than Nebuchadnezzars grazing in the Forrest among bea stis, even untill his hairs were grown to bee like Eagles feathers, and his nails like birds claws? Dan. 4. 31. to 36. and yet hee again reigned in Babel. Worse than Josephs? when hee was thrown into a Pit, and left hopeles; or when sold to the Ishmaeliticke Merchants, and then cast into prison? yet after all this, his said brethren were faine to become petitioners to him: Worse than Job when hee sat scraping his soars on the dunghill, had all his houses burnt, all his cattell stollen, and his children slain? yet hee was far richer afterwards, than before.

How

How rashly then hast thou judged of thy Masters dealing with thee? It were more agreeable to reason and religion, to conclude the contrary; for both experiences, and reason-teachers, that violent pressures, like violent motions, are weakest at the furthest. When the morning is darkest, then comes day: yea, usually after the lowest ebbe, follows the highest spring-tide: And religion teaches, that if wee love God, all things, even the worst of afflictions shall so concur, and co-operate to our good, that we would not have wanted them for any good. Wherefore hold but fast to God, and my soul for thine, neither affliction, nor ought else shall hurt thee. You know, while Adam was at peace with God, all things were at peace with Adam.

Now this doctrine well digested will breed good blood in our souls, and is especially usefull to bound our desires of release; for though wee may bee importunate, impatient wee may not bee; stay bee never so long, patience must not bee an inch shorter than affliction: If the bridge reach but halfe way over the brooke, wee shall have but an ill favoured passage. Wee are taught in Scripture to praise patience, as wee do a fair day at night: Hee that indureth to the end shall be saved. Matth. 24. 13. Whereas coming but a foot short, may make us miss the prize, and loose the wager wee run for: and then as good never have set foot out of doors. Much the better for that light which will not bring us to bed: perseverance is a kind of all in all, continuance is the Crown of all other graces; and heaven shall bee the Crown of continuance.

But not seldom doth the Lord only release his children out of extreme adversity here, but withall makes their latter end so much the more prosperous, by how much the more their former time hath been miserable and adverse. Wee have experience in Job, You have heard, saith Saint James of the patience of Job, and what end the Lord made with him. What end is that? the holy Ghost tells you. That the Lord blessed his latter end, more than his beginning; and gave him twice as much, as hee had before: for whereas at first hee had 7000 Sheep, 3000 Camels, 500 yoke of Oxen, and 500 Shee Asses: after his reparation he had 14000 Sheep, 6000 Camels, 2000 yoke of Oxen, and 1000 Shee Asses, every one double: and whereas the number of his children remained the same they were before, namely seven Sons, and three Daughters, the number of them were also doubled: as the learned observe: for whereas his Beasts, according to the condition of Beasts miserly perished; the souls of his Children were saved: so that hee had twice so many children also, whereof ten were with him on earth, and the other ten with God in heaven. Job 42. 10, to 14. And in Joseph, who was bred up in the school of affliction from his infancy; yea when his turn was come, one hour changes his fetters of Iron into chains of Gold; his rags into Robes, his Stocks into a Chariot, his prison into a Palace, the snuffe of his Gyves into a brooch; and whereas he was thirty years kept under, hee ruled in the height and lustre of all honour and glory the space of eighty years. And one minute made in Lazarus a far greater change, and preferment. And in David, who for a long time was in such

fear of Saul, that hee was forc'd to flie for his life, first to *Samuel*, where Saul pursued him; then to *Jonathan*, where his grief is doubled, then to *Achimelit*, where is Doeg to betray him; after that hee flieth to *Achish*, King of Gath; where being discovered, hee is in greatest fear of all, lest the King should take away his life; and lastly, when hee returns to his own *Ziklag*, hee finds it smitten, and burnt with fire, and his wives taken prisoner; and in the mid'st of all his grief, when hee had wept until hee could weep no more; the people being vexed, intend to stone him; so that, as hee had long before complained, there was but a step between him and death; but mark the issue, though his heart were now not onely brim full, but ran over with grief: yet within two days the *Crown of Israel* is brought unto him, and hee is anointed King, 2 Sam. 1: and for the present hee was able to comfort himself in the Lord his God, 1 Sam. 30. 6. Yea, after this, when by that foul sin of *Adultery* and *Murder*, hee had brought more enemies about his ears, (God, and men, and Devils) having once repented his fault, hee was able to say with confidence, O God! thou hast shewed mee great troubles and adversities, but thou wilt take mee up from the depth of the earth, and increase my honour, Psal. 71. 20, 21. He knew well enough that it is Gods use to bring comfort out of sorrow, as hee brought water out of the rock, and that cherishing was wont to follow stripes: And indeed, how oft hath a *Tragick* entrance had a happy end? Like that wee read of *Michael*, who was condemned to death by the Emperour *Leo*, upon a false accusation; but before the execution, the Emperour died, and *Michael* was chosen in his stead. And of *Mordecai*, who being in the fore-noon appointed to the *Gibbet*, was in the after-noon advanced next of all to the throne, And *Queen Elisabeth* of blessed memory, who reigned at the same time that shee expected to suffer, and was Crowned, when shee looked to bee beheaded. God loves to do by his children, as *Joseph* did by his Father; first, wee must have our beloved *Joseph* a long time detained from us, then hee robbes us of *Simeon*; after that, sends for our best beloved *Benjamin*, and makes us believe hee will rob us of all our children at once, all the things that are dear to us: But why is it? even that when wee thinke to have lost all, hee might return himself, and all again with the greater interest of joy and felicity. The Lord, saith *Hanna*, killeth and maketh alive; first, killeth, and then maketh alive; bringeth down to the grave, and raiseth up: The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; bringeth low, and exalteth; hee raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the Dung-hill; to set them among Princes, and to make them inherite the seat of glory: 1 Sam. 2. 6, 7, 8. And why all this? but that in his own might, no man might bee strong. ver. 9. That which *Plutarch* reports of *Dionysius*, (how hee took away from one of his Nobles, almost his whole estate, and seeing him nevertheless continue as jocund and well contented as ever, hee gave him that again, and as much more) is a common thing with the Lord: and thousands can witness, that though they went weeping under the burthen, when they first carried the precious seed of repentance; yet they

still returned with joy, and brought their sheaves with them, *Psalm* 124. 5. 6.

Objection. But thou thinkest thou shalt not hold our, if God should long delay thee.

Answer. If hee delay thee never so long, hee will bee sure to support thee as long, *1 Cor.* 10. 13. which is much at one upon the matter. If hee suffer thee to bee sorely tempted, hee will not suffer thee to be tempted above thy strength: *2 Cor.* 12. 8, 9, 10. His grace shall bee sufficient for thee at the least, *2 Cor.* 12. 9. *Phil.* 4. 13. which was *Paul's* answer, and is may suffice all suitors; the measure of our patience, shall be proportionable to our sufferings, and our strength equalled to our temptations, *1 Cor.* 13. 4. 7. 12. Now if God do either take away our appetites, or give us more, it is enough.

True, a Ship of never so great a burthen, may bee over-laden till it sink again; or if wee shall wear away all the steel with rubbing, the Tool is left unprofitable. But my thoughts (saith God) are not as your thoughts, nor my ways as your ways, *Isa.* 55. 8. God is not Tyrant to afflict thee unmeasurably, neither will he draw a sword to kill thee, or call for Scorpions, when a rod is too much. Hee that made the vessel, knows her burthen, and how to ballace her; yea, hee that made all things, very good, cannot but do a thing very well. Indeed, God seemeth to wrestle with us, as he did with *Jacob*; but hee supplies us with hidden strength at length to get the better: And grace to stand in affliction, and to gain by it, is better than freedom or deliverance. The Ship which was a Type of the Church, consumed not all the while it burned with fire; because God was in the midst of it. The Ship at Anchor is sorely tossed to and fro, but cannot be carried away, either by waves, winds, or sea-monsters: *Satan*, and the world may disturb us, but they can never destroy us: Our head *Christ* being above, wee cannot bee drowned. If there can bee no dissolution, unless wee could bee pluck'd from his arms, that is Almighty, for our life, is bid with *Christ* in God, *Colos.* 3. 3. Hee dath not trust us with our own souls life, but hides it in his Son *Jesus*; because if it were in our own hands, we should easily bee tempted to sell it, as *Adam* did for an Apple, and *Esaue* for a mess of Pottage. Whereas now wee are safe, for so pluck us out of his hands that is Almighty, requires an adversary stronger than himself. Neither wants hee care; hee that numbers our very hairs, what account doth hee make of our souls? Not love, for if hee hath bought us with his blood, and given us himself, will hee deny us anything that is good for us? *John* 10. 11. 14. 15. 18.

Wherefore silence your reason, and exalt your faith, (how pressing, or piercing so ever your sufferings bee) which pulls off the vizard from his face, and sees a loving heart under contrary appearances. Trust the mercy of God, which is of infinite perfection; and the merits of *Christ*, which are of perfect satisfaction: and then hope will bear up thy heave heart, as bladders do an unskillfull swimmer: Otherwise, if thou shalt walke by senses, and not by faith, *2 Cor.* 5. 7. fear will no less multiply evils, than faith would diminish them: and thou shalt resemble

his *Excellency*, who was not afraid of his burthen, the shadow only frighted him: *Is not this man who is now in the world?*

Section 4.

Objection. Although Christ in the Gospel hath made many large and precious promises; yet there are none so generall; which are not limited with the condition of faith; and the fruit thereof, *repentance*; and each of them are so tied, and entayled, that none can lay claim to them but true believers; which require, and turn from all their sins to serve him in holiness; without which we may shall see the Lord: *Heb. 12. 14. Isa. 59. 20.* But I want these qualifications, without which, how can I expect supplication in my sufferings; or an happy deliverance out of them? however it fares with believers, whom Christ hath undertaken for: yea, I have such a wicked heart, and my sins are so many, and great; that these comforts nothing concern me: for by that plea iniquity, and some wickedness, shall keep the same, *John 4. 8.*

Answer. So our faith is *deceitful*, though they be many and great; yet they cannot hinder our interest in the promises of God.

Admit thou art a great sinner, what then? art thou a greater sinner than *Matthew*, or *Zachary*, who were sinfull *Publicans*; and got their livings by pilling, and polling; oppression, and extortion? than *Amy Magdalen*, a common strumpet; possessor of many Devils? than *Paul*, a bloody persecutor of Christ and his Church? than the Thief upon the Cross, who had spent his whole life to the last hour in abominable wickedness? than *Manasses*, that our rageous sinner, and most wicked wretch that ever was; an Idolater; a malicious Persecutor of the truth; a defiler of Gods holy Temple; a sacrificer of his own children unto idols, that is, Devils; a notable witch, and wicked forcerer; a bloody murderer of exceeding many of the dear Saints, and true Prophets of the Lord; and one who did not run headlong alone into all hellish impiety, but led the people also out of the way to do more wickedly than did the Heathen, whom the Lord cast out and destroyed? I am sure thou wilt not say thou art more wicked, than hee was; and yet this *Manasses*, this wretch, more like a Devil than man, than a Saint of God, repented him of his sins from the bottome of his heart, was received. (I cannot speak it without ravishing wonder of Gods boundles and never sufficiently admitted mercy) was received, I cry to grace, and obtained the pardon of all his horrible sins, and most abominable wickednesses. And are not these, and many the like examples, written for our learning; and recorded by the holy Ghost, to the end that wee may gather unto our selves assurance of the same pardon, for the same sins, upon the same repentances, and believing.

Are thy sins great? *His mercies are infinite*; hadst thou committed all the sins that ever were committed, yet in comparison of Gods mercy, they are less than a mote in the Sun to all the world, or a drop of water to the whole Ocean: for the Sea though great, yet may be measured; but

God's

God's mercy cannot bee circumscribed: and hee both can and will as easily forgive us the debt of *ten thousand millions of pounds, as one penny*; and as soon pardon the sins of a wicked *Manasse*; as of a righteous *Abraham*, as wee come unto him by unfeigned repentance, and earnestly desire and implore his grace and mercy, *Rom. 5. 20.*

The Tenure of our salvation is not by a covenant of works, but by a covenant of grace; founded not on our worthiness, but on the free mercy and good pleasure of God; and therefore the Prophet well annexeth *blissfulness* to the remission of sins; *Blessed is hee whose transgression is forgiven, Psal. 32. 1.*

Yea, the more miserable, wretched, and sinfull wee are, the more fit objects wee are, whereupon hee may exercise, and shew the infinite riches of his bounty, mercy, virtue, and sufficiency. And this our spirituall Physician can aswell, and easily cure desperate diseases, even the remedies *Consumption*, the dead *Apoplex*, and the filthy *Leprosie of the soul*, as the smallest malady, or least faintness. Yea, hee can aswell raise the dead, as cure the sick, and aswell of *Stones* as of *Jews*, make *Abrahams children*. Did hee not without the *Sua* at the *Creation*; cause light to shine forth; and without rain, at the same time, make the earth fruitfull? why then should you give yourself over, where your Physician doth not? Before; what sin is there whereof wee can despair of the remission, when wee hear our Saviour pray for the forgiveness of his *murderers*, and *blasphemers*? And indeed, despair is a sin which never knew *Jesus*.

It was a sweet saying of one at his death, when mine inquiry is greater than thy mercy O God, then will I fear and despair; but that can never bee: considering our sins bee the sins of men, his mercy the mercy of an infinite God. Yea, his mercies are so great, that among the *thirteen properties* of God mentioned *Exod. 34.* almost all of them appertain to his mercy, whereas one onely concerns his might, and onely two, his justice. Again; shall it ever enter into our hearts, to think that God gives us rules to keep, and yet break them himself? Now his rule is this, *Though thy brother sin against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, it repeareth mee; thou shalt forgive him.* The son angers his father, he doth not straight disinherit him, but Gods love to his people, exceeds a fathers love to his son, *Matth. 7. 11.* and a mothers too, *Isa. 49. 19.*

I hear many menaces and threats for sin, but I read as many promises of mercy, and all they indefinite, excluding none whose impenitency and infidelity excludeth not themselves: every sin deserves damnation, but no sin shall condemn, but the lying and continuing in it.

Wherefore if our clamorous conscience, like some sharp fang'd officer, arrests us at Gods suit, let us put in bail, two *subsidiue virtues*, Faith, and Repentance; and so stand the triall: the Law is on our side, the Law of grace is within us, and this Law is his that is our Advocate; and he is our Advocate, that is our Judge; and hee is our Judge, that is our Saviour; even the head of our selves, *Jesus Christ*.

For the first of these; do but repent, and God will pardon thee, bee thy sins never so many, and innumerable for multitude, never so heinous for quality and magnitude; *Isa. 44. 7. Ezek. 18. 23. 17. Yea, sins upon Repentance are so remitted, as if they had never been committed: I have put away thy transgressions as a cloud, and thy sins as a mist; Isa. 44. 22. and what by corruption hath been done, by repentance is undone, as the former examples, and many other, witness. Come and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, Isa. 1. 18. yet whiter; for the Prophet David laying open his blood-guiltiness, and his original impurity, useth these words: Purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be cleave; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow, Psal. 51. 7.*

And in reason; did hee come to call sinners to repentance, and shall he not shew mercy to the penitent? Or, who would not cast his burthen upon him, that doth desire to give ease? *As I live, saith the Lord, I would not the death of a sinner, Ezek. 18. 32. and 33. 11.*

Section 5.

Objection. Yea, but I cannot Repent.

Answer. In time of temptation, a man is not a competent Judge in his own case; In humane Laws, there is a nullity held of words and actions extorted, and wrung from men by fear: because in such cases, a man is held not to bee a free-man, but to have power or command in some sort, of himself. *A troubled soul is like troubled waters, wee can discern nothing clearly in it; wherefore (if thou canst) lay aside prejudice, and tell mee in cold blood, how it fares with thee at other times, though indeed thy words at present are enough to convince thee: For first, thou findest sin a burthen too heavy for thee to bear, which thou didst not formerly; what's the reason? are thy sins more and greater? No, but the contrary; for though they appear more, yet they are less; for sin, the more it is seen and felt, the more it is hated; and thereupon is the less. Moles are in a room, before the Sun shines, but they appear onely then.*

Again secondly, the very complaint of sin, springing from a displeasure against it, shews that there is something in thee opposite to sin: viz. that thou art penitent in affection, though not yet in action, even as a child is rational in power, though not in act. Yea more, thou accusest, and condemnest thy selfe for thy sins; and by accusing our selves, wee prevent Satan; by judging our selves, wee prevent God. Neither was the Centurion ever so worthy, as when hee thought himself most unworthy: for all our worthiness is in a capable misery; nor does God ever thinke well of him, that thinkes so of himself. But to let this passe.

Are not your failings, your grief? are they not besides your will? are they not contrary to the current of your desires, and the main bent of your resolutions, and endeavours? Dost thou determine to continue in the practice of any one sin? Yea, dost thou not make conscience of all Gods Commandments, one as well as another; the first table, as well as the second, and

and the second, as well as the first, Matt. 5. 19. Dost thou not grieve for sins of all sorts, secret as well as known, originall, as well as usuall, of a mission, as well as commission, lesser, (viz thoughts) as well as greater: yea, as well for the evill which cleaves to thy best works, as for the evill works, Rom. 7. 21. and as heartily and unfeignedly desire that thou maist never commit it, as that God should never impute it? 2 Tim. 2. 19. Dost thou not fear to displease him, nor so much because, hee is just so punish, as for his mercy and goodness sake; and more fear the breach of the Law, than the curse? Dost thou not love rather to bee, than seem or bee thought good; and seek more the power of godlinesse, than the shew of it? Job 1. 1. If so, well may Satan, and thine own conscience accuse thee of impenitency, and unbelief; but Christ thy Judge never. Yea, then, notwithstanding your failings, you may say with David, I have kept thy word, Psal. 18. 21. 22. 23. for though this bee not such a measure of keeping as the Law requireth; yet it is such a keeping, as God in Christ accepteth: for suppose thy knowledge is still small, thy faith weak, thy charity cold, thy heart dull, and hard, thy good works few and imperfect, and all thy zealous resolutions easily hindred and quite overthrowen with every small temptation: yet God that worketh in us both the wil and the work, wil accept the wil for the work; and that which is wanting in us, Christ will supply with his own righteousness: Hee respecteth not what wee can do, so much as what wee would do; and that which wee would performe, and cannot, hee esteemeth it as though it were performed: whereas, take away the will, and all acts (in God's sight) are equall.

As the wicked sin more than they sin, in their desire, so the righteous do more good than they do, in their will to do it. If there bee a *paratum cor*, though there bee not a *perforatum cor*; a profer of blood, though no expence of blood for the honour of Christ, it is taken for Martyrdom, as Origen testified of one; *Non ille Martyrio, sed Martyrium illi desuit. I know thy poverty, but thou art rich*, saith the Spirit to the Church of Smyrna; poor in thy condition, rich in thy affection to goodness; *Facultas secundum voluntatem, non voluntas secundum facultatem estimanda est*; God esteems our charitable beneficence, not onely *secundum quod habemus*, but *secundum quod tribuere velimus*. Wee are charged to forsake all houses, lands, friends, liberties, lives, for Christ; yet many dy with houses, lands, and riches, in their possession, whom Christ receiveth and crowns in Heaven, because they did part with all *secundum animæ preparationem*: What wee would have done, shall bee reckoned to us, as done; wee do it *quoad conatum*, though *non quoad effectum*? In like manner God taketh a heart desirous to repent and believe, for a penitent and believing heart; *volens & dolens*. The vehement desire of godly sorrow, or a sorrow because we cannot sorrow, goes for godly sorrow with God: so that to sigh and grieve for what wee cannot do, is to come short, and yet so do it too: for God likes the will so wel, that in his Son what we would do, is in acceptance done, 2 Cor. 8. 12. which text one brings in thus: O! what an unspeakable comfort was this cordiall verse to my afflicted soul; And well it might: for if wee hate

our corruptions, and strive against them, they shall not bee counted ours. It is not I (saith Paul) but sin that dwelleth in mee: Rom. 7. 20 for what displeaseth us, shall never hurt us; and wee shall bee esteemed of God, to be what wee love, and desire, and labour to be.

The comfort of this doctrine is intended, and belongs to troubled consciences, and those that would sin do better: but let no presumptuous sinners meddle with it; for what hast thou to do to take (I say not the childrens bread to eat. *Matth. 15. 26.* but even) the least parcell of Gods word into thy mouth? seeing thou hatest to bee reformed, *Psal. 50. 16. 19.* But if thou beest a weary and heavy laden sinner; thou maist comfort thy self thus; I do hateful things, but I hate that I do; I break the Law, but yet I love the Law, as holy, just, and good: Flesh is in mee, but I am not in the Flesh; I must not fix mine eyes onely upon mine own resistance, or failings, but on Gods assistance and acceptance in his Son, by which I shall bee able to leap over all walls and impediments, *Psal. 18. 29.* The Law is given, that Grace may bee required; Grace is given, that the Law may bee fulfilled; by us, evangelically, for us, by Christ (whose righteousness is ours) perfectly, as Saint Augustine speaks. The Law is a glass to shew us our spots, the Gospell a fountain to wash them away. Wherefore cast not both thine eyes upon thy sin, but receive one, to behold the remedy: look upon the Law to keep thee from presumption, and upon the Gospell, to keep thee from despair.

Canst thou not aggravate thine own sins, but thou must extenuate, and call in question Gods mercy, and Christs all-sufficiency, (spoil him of his power and glory) Though the grievousness of our sins should increase our repentance, yet they should not diminish our faith, and assurance of pardon, and forgiveness. As the plaister must not be less than the sore, so the tent must not bee bigger than the wound. It was a sweet and even consil which Saint Paul took, who when hee would comfort himself against corruption, and evill actions, *Rom. 7. 20.* then; not I, but sin dwelling in mee: when he would humble himself, notwithstanding his graces, then; not I but the grace of God in mee, *1 Cor. 15. 10.*

Section 6.

Objection. But I am not worthy the least mercy, I have so often abused it, and so little profited by the meanes of Grace.

Answer. I think so too, for if thou refusest the offer of mercy until thou deservest it, wo bee to thee: But if thou wilt take the right course; renounce the broken reed of thine own free will, which hath so often deceived thee; and put all thy trust in the grace of Christ: The way to bee strong in the Lord, is to bee weak in thy self, bee weak in thy self, and strong in the Lord, and through faith thou shalt bee more than a Conquerour. Leave tuging and struggling with thy sin, and fall with Jacob to wrestle with Christ for a blessing; and though thy self go limping away, yet shalt thou bee a Prince with God, and bee delivered from Esau's bondage. But thou standest upon thine own feet, and therefore fallest so soonly: thou wilt like a child

child, go alone, and of thy self, and therefore gettest so many knocks. And thou wouldest accept of a pardon too, if thou mightest pay for it; but Gods mercies are free, and hee bids thee come and buy without silver, and without price; or else he says, thou and thy money perish. Thou wouldest go the naturall way to work, *what shall I do to inherit eternall life?* but it is impossible to inherit it by any thing that wee can do; for all our righteousnesses are as filthy ragges, *Isa. 64. 6.* Yea, if our doings could have done it, Christ dyed in vain; whereas, if Christ had not died, wee had perished, every mothers child of us, *1 Cor. 15. 22.* and *2 Cor. 5. 14, 15.* *Ephes. 2. 1.* *Colos. 2. 13.* *Exek. 18. 4.* *Joh. 11. 50.* *Rom. 5. 6. 8.* and *14. 9.* *1 Cor. 15. 3.* *Matth. 18. 11.*

O fool? dost thou not know that our sins are his sins, and his righteousness, our righteousness: *Jer. 23. 6.* *Psal. 4. 1.* and that God esteems of Faith above all other graces, deeds, or acts of thine? as what did our Saviour answer, when the people asked him, *What shall wee do that wee might work the works of God?* The work of God is, that yee believe on him whom hee hath sent, *Joh. 6. 28, 29.* and yet thou talkest of thy worthiness, and thou takest this for humility too, but it is pride; for if thou wouldest deny thy self, and bee nothing in thine own eyes, renounce thine own righteousness, and wholly and onely rest on thy Saviour Jesus Christ for thy salvation; thou wouldest not hope the more in regard of thine own worthiness, nor yet doubt in respect of thine own unworthiness: But thou wouldest first bee worthy, and deserve of God; and then accept of Christ, and deserve Christ at Gods hands, by thy good works, and graces: which pride of thine, and opinion of merit, is a greater sin then all thy other sins which thou complainest of: and except you do abandon it, and wholly rely upon the grace, and free mercy of God for salvation, Christ shall profit you nothing, *Gal. 2. 16.* and *5. 1. to 7.* *Colos. 3. 11.* for nothing is available to salvation, but faith, which worketh by love, *Gal. 5. 6.* whence it is called righteousness through faith, *ver. 5.* Faith is the Rasse, whereupon wee stay our selves, in life and death; by faith wee are blessed, *Gal. 3. 9.* by faith wee rejoice in tribulation, *Rom. 5. 2.* by faith wee have access unto God, *Ephes. 3. 12.* by faith we overcome the world, *1 Joh. 5. 4.* the flesh, *Gal. 5. 24.* and this is the shield whereby wee quench the fiery darts of Satan, and resist his power, *Ephes. 6. 16.* Yea, whosoever seeks to bee justified by the Law, they are abolished from Christ, and fall from grace, *Gal. 5. 4.* Stand fast therefore in the liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free, and bee not tangled again with the yoke of bondage. And say, Lord wee are not worthy to bee servants, and thou makest us sons; nay, beirs, and co-beirs with thee, of everlasting glory.

Objection. I grant the Lord is mercifull and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin: but hee is just, as well as mercifull, and therefore hee will not acquit the wicked *Exod. 34. 6. 7.* but reward them according to their works, *Revel. 20. 12. 13.* and *22. 18.*

Answer. Hee will therefore pardon all thy sins, (if thou unfeignedly repent

pear and wholly rely upon Christ for thy salvation by a lively faith) because hee is just: for as the Lord cannot in justice let sin go unpunished (for the wages of sin is death Rom. 6. 23. Death in the person, if not in the surety; and therefore hath punished the sins of all men, either in his Son, or will thoroughly punish them in the parties themselves) so the same justice will not admit, that the same sins should be twice punished; once in our Saviour, and again, in the faithful: or that a debt once paid, should be required the second time, 1 Joh. 1. 9. Now that Christ hath sufficiently satisfied for all the sins of the faithful, and paid our debt even to the utmost farthing; it is evident by many places of Scripture, as Isa. 53. 4. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Heb. 9. 26. 1 Pet. 2. 24. Rom. 3. 25. 26. 1 Joh. 1. 7. 9. and sundry others.

Are we bound to perform perfect obedience to the Law? hee performed it for us: were wee for disobedience subject to the sentence of condemnation, the curse of the Law, and death of body and soul? hee was condemned for us, and bore the curse of the law; hee died in our stead an ignominious death; did wee deserve the anger of God? hee indured his fathers wrathfull displeasure, that so he might reconcile us to his father, and set us at liberty. Hee that deserved no sorrow felt much, that wee who deserved much might feel none: and by his wounds wee are healed, Isa. 53. 5. Adam eat the Apple, Christ paid the price. In a word, whatsoever wee owed, Christ discharged; whatsoever we deserved, he suffered; if not in the self same punishments: (for hee being God could not suffer the eternall torments of Hell) yet in proportion, the dignity of his person (being God and Man) giving value unto his temporary punishments, and making them of more value and worth, than if all the world should have suffered the eternall torments of Hell: for it is more for one that is eternall to die, than for others to die eternall. Therefore was the Son of God made the Son of man, that the Sons of men might be made the Sons of God; and therefore was hee both God and man: lest being in every respect God, he had been too great to suffer for man; or being in every respect man, hee had been too weak to satisfie God.

Seeing therefore our Saviour Christ hath fully discharged our debt, and made full satisfaction to his Fathers justice: God cannot in equity exact of us a second payment, no more than the Creditor may justly require that his debt should be twice paid; once by the Surety, and again, by the Principall.

Again secondly, it is the Lords Covenant made with his Church, and committed to writing, Jer. 31. 34. Heb. 10. 16, 17. Psal. 32. 10. Isa. 55. 7. Ezek. 18. 21, 22, 23. and 33. 11. Mal. 3. 17. Confirmed and ratified by his seals, the Sacraments; together with his Oath, that there might be no place left for doubting: for, God willing more abundantly to shew unto the Heirs of promise, the stability of his counsell; bound him self by an oath, that by two immutable things, wherein it is impossible that God should lie, we might have strong consolation, as the Apostle speaks, Heb. 6. 17. 18.

And lest the afflicted conscience should object, that hee entered into co-

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venant, and made these promises to the Prophets, Apostles, and holy men of God; but not to such bawdy and rebellious sinners, who have most justly deserved, that God should pour out upon them the Vials of his wrath, and those fearful punishments threatened in the Law: All the promises made in the Gospel are general, indefinite, and universall, excluding none that turn from their sins by *unfeigned repentance*, and beleve in Christ Jesus, resting on him alone for their salvation, as appears, *Isa. 55. 1. Ezek. 33. 11. Mark. 16. 16. Job. 3. 14, 15, 16. 36. and 6. 37. 40. Act. 10. 43. 1 Joh. 2. 1.* Neither is there any limitation or exception of this or that sin; for bee they never so grievous and manifo'd, yet if wee perform the condition of *faith and repentance*, they cannot debar us from receiving the benefit of God's mercy, and Christ's merits, as appears, *Isa. 1. 18. Titus 2. 14. 1 Joh. 1. 7. 9.*

And therefore unless thou conceivest of God, that hee is unjust in his dealings, untrue in his Word, a covenant-breaker; yea, a perjured person, (which were most horrible blasphemy once to imagine,) thou must undoubtedly assure thy self, that hee will pardon and forgive thee all thy sins, bee they in number never so many and innumerable; or in nature and quality never so heinous and damnable: if thou turnest unto him by *unfeigned repentance*, and laiest hold upon Christ by a true and lively faith. For consider, doth the Lord say hee will extend his mercie unto all that come unto him? doth hee invite every one? doth hee say *I would have all men saved*, and none to perish? and dost thou say, nay, but hee will not extend his mercy unto mee, hee will have mee to perish, because I am a grievous sinner? What is this but in effect, and at a distance to contradict the Lord, and give the lye to truth it self.

Indeed God says not, Beleeve thou John, or Thomas, and thou shalt bee saved, but hee says, *whosoever beleeveeth, and is baptized, shall bee saved*, which is as good. And yet thou exceptest thy self, hee excludes none; and dost thou exclude one, and that one thy self? Hee would have all men saved, and thou comest in with thy exceptive, *All but mee*; Why thee? a precious singularity, but beware of it: For whereas others that beleeve not the threatnings, flatter away their souls in a presumptuous confidence; thou by not beleeving the promises, wilt cast away thine, in a fallen prodigious desperateness, if thou take not heed. For infidelity on both sides is the cause of all, of presumption in them, of despair in thee, of impiety in every one.

But bee better advised, beleeve the Lord who never brake his word with any soul. Thou wilt give credit to an honest man's bare word, and hast thou no affiance in the mercifull promises of God, past to thee by word, Oath, Seals, Scriptures, Sacraments, the death of his own Son, and (I presume) the Spirit's testimony, if not now, yet at other times: take heed what thou dost, for certainly nothing offends God more, then the not taking of his word.

Section 7.

Objection. I know well that Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness, unto every one that believeth, Rom. 10. 4. But I want faith.

Answer. This is the objection I expected: (for the true Christian is as fearful to entertain a good opinion of himself, as the false is unwilling to bee driven from it.) But is it so? or doth Satan onely tell thee so? I know it is not so, I know that thou believest with some mixture of unbelief, and that this is but a slander of Satans; for as Satan slandereth us to God, Job 1. 9. and God to us, Gen. 3. 4. so hee slandereth us to our selves, Job 16. 9. But least thou shouldest think I slander Satans; know, that you believe, even whiles you complain of unbelief: for as there could bee no shadow, if there were no light, so there cannot bee this fear, where there is no faith. They that know not Christ, think it no such great matter to loose him. But if God once say, this is my Son, Satan will say, if thou bee the Son of God, Matth. 3. 17. and 4. 3. That Divine testimony did not allay his malice, but exasperate it. Neither can the happy building of, Lord I believe, stand without that column to under-prop it, Help thou mine unbelief. And he that doubts not of his estate, his estate is much to be doubted of; doubting and resolution are not meet touch-stones of our success: a presumptuous confidence commonly goes bleeding home, when an humble fear returns in triumph. As it sared between the Philistims and Israel, 1 Sam. 17. 10. 11. The Philistims and Goliath were exceeding confident of the victory, but Saul, and all Israel much discouraged, and greatly afraid: yet Israel got the victory, and the Philistims with their great Goliath were overcome, ver. 51. 52. They that are proudly secure of their going to heaven, do not so frequently come thither, as they that are afraid of their going to hell.

As it is in this world for temporall things, so for the world to come in spirituall things; Cantant pauperes, lugent divites; poor men sing, and rich men cry. Who is so melancholly, as the rich worldling? and who sings so merry a note, as hee that cannot change a groat? so they that have store of grace, mourn for want of it; and they that indeed want it, chant their abundance. But the hopes of the wicked fail them when they are at highest, whereas Gods Children find those comforts in extremity, which they durst not expect.

As there is nothing more usuall, than for a secure conscience to excuse when it is guilty: so nothing more common than for an afflicted conscience to accuse, when it is innocent; and to lay an heavie burthen upon it self, where the Lord giveth a plain discharge: but a bleeding wound is better than that which bleeds not. Some men go crying to heaven, some go laughing and sleeping to hell. Some consciences as well as men, lie speechless before departure: they spend three dayes in a dream, and go from earth to hell, as Jonas from 1st to 3rd towards Tarsish, fast a sleep. And the reason is, they dream their case is passing good, like a man which dreams in his sleep that hee is rich and honorable, and it joyes him very much, but awaking, all

is vanish'd like smoke. Yea, they hope undoubtedly to go to heaven, as all that came out of Egypt hoped to go into Canaan, and inherit the blessed promises: when onely Caleb and Joshua did enter, who prevailed not the Lord. And the reason of this reason is, whereas lodged they are wailing, the Devil and their own credulity perwade them that they are Lambs.

The Philosopher tells us, that those Creatures which have the greatest hearts, as the Stag, the Doe, the Hare, the Cony, and the Mouse, are the most fearfull: and therefore it may bee, God refusing Lyons, and Eagles, the King of Beasts, and Queen of Birds; appointed the gentle Lamb, the fearfull Dove for his sacrifices. A broken and contrite heart O God thou wilt not despise, Psalm 51. 17. And sure I am Christ calls to him onely woe, and heavy-laden sinners, Maith. 11. 28: not such as feel no want of him, Luke 2. 17. and will fill onely such with comfort, as hunger and thirst after righteousness; not such as are in their conceit righteous enough without him, Luke 1. 73: Maith. 23. 24. And yet it is strange, (yea, a wonder) to see how many truly humbled sinners, who have so tender consciences, that they dare not yield to the least evil, for the worlds goods, and refuse no means of being made better; turn every prohibition into reprobation, every dejection into rejection, and if they bee cast down, they cry out, they are cast away: who may sely bee compared to Arriaph in Pharaoh, who when ever hee went abroad, had his servants to carry a stony over his head: least the heavens should fall and crush him: or to a certain foolish, gormucholly Bird, which (as some tell) stands always upon one leg, lest her own weight should sink her into the center of the earth: holding the other over her head, lest the heavens should fall.

Yet bee not offended, I cannot think the worse of a bee; for good is that fear which hinders us from evill act, and makes us the more circumpect. And God hath his end in it, who would have the sins to dye, but the sinner to live.

Yea, in some respect thou art the better to bee thought of, or at least the less to bee feared, for this thy fear: for no man so truly loves, as hee that fears to offend: as Salomon glories upon those words, Blessed is the man that feareth alway: And which is worth the observing, this feare is a commendation often remembered in holy Scripture as a special and highest title mark of Gods children: as for example, Job (with the holy Ghost) was a just man, and he that feared God, Job. 1. 1. Simeon a just man, and one that feared God, Luke. 2. 25. Cornelius a devout man, and one that feared God, Acts 10. 2. And so of Father Abraham, a man that feared God, Gen. 22. 12. Joseph a man who feared God, Gen. 42. 18. The Mid-wives in Egypt feared God, Exod. 1. 17. So that evermore, the fearing of God (as being the beginning of wisdom) is mentioned as the chief note, which is as much as to say, if the fearing of God once go before, working of righteousness will instantly follow after, according to that of the wiseman, Hee that feareth the Lord, will do good.

And this for thy comfort, when Mary Magdalen sorrowed, and wept for her

her sins, *Luke 7, 30.* Christ tells her, *Thy faith hath made the whole* : intimating; that this weeping, this repeating *faith*, is *faith judged* : And the like to the woman with the bloody issue, who presuming but to touch the hem of his garment, fell down before him with fear and trembling, *Mark 5, 27 to 35.* And that humble Canaanite, *Matth. 15, 22. to 29.* And that importunate blind man, *Luke 18, 38. to 43.* As if this humble, this praying *faith*, were onely the saving *faith*. Neither can thy estate bee bad, for as Saint Ambrose told Monica weeping for her seduced Son, *Fieri non potest, ut filius istarum lacrymarum pereat* : It cannot bee, that the son of those tears should ever perisht.

Wherefore lift up thyself thou timorous fainting heart, and do not suspect every spot for a plague token ; do not dye of a meer conceit : for as the end of all motion is rest, so the end of all thy troubles shall bee peace : even where the days are perpetuall Sabbaths, and the diet undisturbed feasts.

But as an empty vessell hung'd up close, though you throw it in to the mid'st of the Sea, will receive no water, so all pleas are in vaine to them that are deas'ned with their own fears : for as Mary would not bee comforted with the sight and speech of Angels, no nor with the sight and speech of Jesus himself, till hee made her know that hee was Jesus ; so untill the holy Spirit sprinkleth the conscience with the blood of Christ, and sheddeth his love into the heart, nothing will do. No creature can take off wrath from the conscience, but hee that set it on. Wherefore, the God of peace give you the peace of God which passeth all understanding. *Yea, O Lord, speak thou Musick to the wounded conscience, Thyndor, to the feared ; that thy justice may reclaim the one, thy mercy relieve the other, and thy favour comfort us all, with peace and salvation in Jesus Christ.*

Section 8.

But secondly, if this will not satisfie, call to thy remembrance the time past, and how it hath been with thee formerly, as David did in thy very case, *Psalms 77, 2. to 12.* And likewise *Job, Chapter 13.* for as still water's represent any object in their bottome clearly, so those that are troubled, or agitated, do it but dimly, and imperfectly. But if ever thou hadst true faith begotten in thy heart, *Job. 1, 13.* by the ministry of the Word, *Romans 10, 17. Jam. 1, 18, 21.* and the Spirit's powerfull working with it, *Job. 3, 3, 5, 8.* whereby thine heart was drawn to take Christ, and apply him a Saviour to thine own soul ; so that thou wert forced to go out of thy self, and rely wholly and onely on his merits ; and that it further manifested its self by working a hatred of sin, and an apparent change in thy whole life, by dying unto sin, and living unto righteousness ; and that thou hast not since, returned to thine old sins, like the Dog to his vomit : if it hath sometime brought forth in thee, the sweet fruit of heavenly and spiri'tuall joy ; if it hath purged thine heart in some measure from noysome lusts and affections ; as secret pride, self-love, hypocrisie, carnall confidence, wrath, malice, and the like : so that the spirit within

within thee fighteth against the flesh. If thou canst now say, *I love the godly, because they are godly*, 1 Job. 3. 14. and hast an hungering after Christ, and after a greater measure of heavenly and spirituall graces, and more lively tokens of his love and favour communicated unto thee: *My soul for these*, thou hast given false evidence against thy self; for as in a gloomy day there is so much light whereby wee may know it to bee day, and not night; so there is something in a Christian under a cloud, whereby hee may bee discerned to bee a true believer, and not an hypocrite. But, to make it manifest to thy self, that thou art so.

Know, first, that where there is any one grace in truth, there is every one in their measure. If thou art sure thou hast love, I am sure thou hast faith: for they are as inseparable, as fire and heat, life and motion, the root and the sap, the Sun and its light: and so of other graces. Or, dost thou feel that Christ is thy greatest joy; sin thy greatest sorrow; that when thou canst not feel the presence of the spirit in thy heart, thou goest mourning, notwithstanding all other comforts? Assuredly as that holy Martyr said, if thou wert not a wedding Child, thou couldest never so heartily mourn for the absence of the Bridegroom. Thus I might go on, but a few Graces will shew that the Plant is a Vine, and not a Thorn. Take but notice of this, and severall graces will one strengthen another, as stones in an Arch. As for example, Master Peacock, Fellow of a House, being afflicted in conscience, (as thou art) and at the point of despair; when some Ministers ask'd whether they should pray for him, answered, By no means do no so dishonour God, as to pray for such a Reprobate as I am: but his young Pupill standing by, said, (with tears in his eyes) Certainly a Reprobate could never bee so tender of Gods dishonour; which hee well considering, was thereby comforted and restored: when neither hee with his learning, nor any other Ministers with their sage advice, could do any good.

Again secondly, if ever thou hadst true faith wrought in thy heart, bee not discouraged; for as the former graces shew, that thou hast with Mary made choice of that better part, which shall never bee taken from thee: So this grace of faith is Christ's wedding Ring, and to whomsoever hee gives it, hee gives himselfe with it; wee may lose the sexer, but never the essence of it: It may bee eclipsed, not extinguished: *Fides concussa, non excussa*; The gifts and calling of God are without repentance: as it is, Rom. 11. 29. Friends are unconstant, riches, honours, pleasures, are unconstant; the world is unconstant, and life it self is unconstant; but the Lord change not, Malachi 3. 6.

In a swoond the soul doth not exercise her functions; a man neither hears, nor sees, nor feels, yet shee is still in the body. The Frantick man in his mad fits, doth not exercise reason, yet hee hath it: He loseth the use for a time, not the habit. Yea, a sober man hath not always the use of his senses, reason and understanding, as in his sleep: shall we therefore conclude that this man is senseless, unreasonable, and without understanding?

standing? it were most absurd: for if we have patience but a while, our argument will appear manifestly false.

Trees (and so wee are fitly called) bee not dead in winter, (which resembles the time of adversity) because the sap is shut up in the roots, and confined thither by the cold frosts, that they cannot shew themselves in the production of leaves and fruits: for by experience wee know, that for the present they live, and secretly suck nourishment out of the earth; which maketh them spring and revive again, when Summer comes. Yea, even whiles they are grievously shaken with the winds, and ripped with cold frosts, they are not hurt thereby; but contrarily they take deeper root, have their worms and cankers kill'd by it; and so are prepared, & made fit to bring forth more fruit, when the comfortable Spring approaches, and the sweet showres, and warm Sun-beams fall and descend upon them. Elementary bodies, lighten and darken, cool and warm, die and revive, as the Sun presents, or absents it self from them. And is not Christ to our souls the onely Sun of righteousness, and fountain of all comfort? so that if wee withdraw himself but a little, wee become like planes in the winter, quite withered; yea, in appearance stark dead: so like Trees void both of leaves and fruits though even then there remains faith in the heart, as sap in the root, or as fire tated up in the ashes.

Which faith, though it bee not the like strong, yet it is the like precious faith to that of Abrahams: whereby to lay bold, and out on the perfect righteousness of Christ. The woman that was diseased with an issue, did but touch, and with a trembling hand, and but the hem of his garment; and yet went away both healed, and comforted.

Well might I doubt of my salvation, says Bradford, feeling the weakness of my faith, love, hope, &c. if these were the causes of my salvation: but there is no other cause of it; or, of his mercy, but his mercy. Wherefore hast thou but a touch of sorrow for sin, a spark of hope, a grain of faith in thy heart? thou art safe enough. The Anchor heere deep, and is not seen, yet is the stay of all.

The Bladder blown, may float upon the flood,
But cannot sink, nor stick in filth by mud.

But thou dreamest of a faith without doubting, which some rashly boast they have: but as no righteousness can bee perfect without sin; so no assurance can bee perfect without doubting: Take the evenest balances, and the most equall weights; yet at the first putting in, there will bee some inequality; though presently after they settle themselves in a just poise. So is a cloud that often hinders the Sun from our eyes, yet it is still a Sun; the vision or feeling of this comfort may bee sometime suspended, the Union with Christ is never dissolved.

An usual thing with believers to have their ebbing and flowing, waxing and waning, Summer and winter; to bee sometimes so comfortable and courageous, that wee can say with David, Though I were in the valley of death, yet would I fear none ill, Psal. 133. 4. otherwhiles again so deadened and dejected

in our spirits, that wee are like him when hee said, *Our day is short* by the hand of Saul, 1 Sam. 27. 1. Sometimes so strong in faith, that wee can overcome the greatest assaults; and with Peter, can walk upon the swelling waves: by and by so faint, and brought to so low an ebbe, that wee fall down even in far less dangers, as Peter began to sink at the rising of the winde, *Matth.* 14. 29. 30. And indeed, if the wings of our faith bee clipp'd, either by our own sins, or Satans temptations, how should not our spirits lye grovelling on the ground?

Self. 9.

But thirdly and lastly, (for I hasten) Suppose thou art at the last cast, even at the very brink of despair; and that thy conscience speaks nothing but bitter things, of Gods wrath, hell and damnation; and that thou hast no feeling of faith, or grace; yet know that it is Gods iust (and I wish wee could all take notice of it) to worke in, and by contraries: For instance, in creating of the world, hee brought light out of darkness, and made all things not of something, but of nothing; clean contrary to the course of Nature.

In his preserving of it, hee hath given us the *Rain-bow*, which is a signe of rain, as a certain pledge that the world shall never the second time bee drowned. Hee caused Elias his sacrifice to burn in the mid^d of water; and fetcheth hard bones out of the mid^d of thin vapours. When he meant to blesse Jacob, hee wrestled with him as an Adversary, even till he lamed him: When he meant to preferre Joseph to the Throne, hee shrew him down into the Dungeon; and to a golden chaine about his neck, he laded him with *Iron ones* about his legges. Thus Christ opened the eyes of the blind, by anointing them with clay and spittle; more likely to put them out: And would not cure Lazarus till after hee was dead, buried, and stunk again; no question, to teach us, that wee must bee cast down by the Law, before wee can bee raised up by the Gospell: that wee must dye unto sin, before wee can live unto righteousness: and become fools, before wee can bee truly wise.

In the work of Redemption, hee gives life, not by life, but by death, and that a most cursed death; making that the best instrument of life, which was the worst kind of death: *Optimum fecit instrumentum vitæ, quod erat pessimum mortis genus.*

In our effectuall vocation, hee calls us by the Gospell, unto the *Jems*, a stumbling-block, and unto the world meer foolishness: And when it is his pleasure that any should depend upon his goodness, and providence, hee makes them feel his anger, and to bee nothing in themselves; that they may rely altogether upon him.

Thus God works joy out of fear, light out of darkness; and brings us in the Kingdom of heaven, by the Gates of hell: according to that 1 Sam. 2. ver 6. 7. And wherein does thy case differ? Hee sends his Serjants to arrest thee for thy debt; commands thee and all thou hast to be sold. But why? onely to shew thee thy misery without Christ, that thou mayst seek to him for mercy: for although hee hides his fatherly

as Joseph once did his brotherly, his meaning is in conclusion to forgive thee every faulting, *Matth. 18. 26, 27.*

And dost thou make thy slight sufferings an argument of his displeasure? for shame mutter not at the matter, but bee silent: It is not said, God will not suffer us to bee tempted at all, but that we shall not bee tempted above that we are able to bear, *1 Cor. 10. 13.* And assure thy self, what ever thy sufferings bee, thy faith shall not fail to get the victory; as oil over-swims the greatest quantity of water you can pour upon it. True, let none presume; (no not the most righteous) for bee shall scarcely bee saved, *1 Pet. 4. 18.* yet let him not despair, for bee shall bee saved, *Rom. 8. 35.*

Onely accept with all thankfulness the mercy offered, and apply the promises to thine own soul: for the benefit of a good thing, is in the use; wisdom is good, but not to us, if it bee not exercised; cloth is good, but not to us, except it be worn; the light is comfortable, but not to him that will live in darkness: a preservative in our pocket, never taken, cannot yield us health, nor baggs of money being ever sealed up, do us any pleasure; no more will the promises, (no nor Christ himself, that onely summum bonum) except they are applied: Yea, better there were no promises, than not applied. The Physician is more offended at the contempt of his Physick in the Patient, than with the loathsomeness of the disease. And this I can assure thee, if the blood of Christ bee applied to thy soul, it will soon stanch the blood of thy conscience; and keep thee from bleeding to death, *1 Feb. 1. 7.*

But secondly, instead of mourning continually as the tempter bids thee; rather rejoyce continually as the Apostle bids thee, *1 Thes. 5. 16.* Neither think it an indifferent thing, to rejoyce, or not to rejoyce; but know that we are commanded to rejoyce, to shew that wee break a commandment if wee rejoyce not: Yea, wee cannot believe if wee rejoyce not; for faith, in the commandments breeds obedience; in the threatnings, fear; in the promises, comfort. True, thou thinkest thou dost well to mourne continually; yea, it is the common disease of the innocentest souls: but thou dost very ill in it: for, when you forget to rejoyce in the Lord, then you begin to muse, and after to fear, and after to distrust, and at last to despair: and then every thought seems to be a sin against the holy Ghost. Yea, how many fines doth the afflicted conscience record against it self; repenting for breaking this commandment, and that commandment; and never repenteth for breaking this commandment, rejoyce evermore.

But what's the reason? Ignorance: thou thinkest thy self poor and miserable, and onely therefore thinkest so, because thou knowest not thy riches and happiness in Christ: for else thou wouldest say with the Prophet Habakkuk, in the want of all other things, I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation, *Habbak. 3. 17, 18.* Thou wouldest rejoyce that thy name is written in the book of life, as our Saviour injoines, *Luk. 10. 20.* though thou hadst nothing else to rejoyce in.

But it is nothing to be blessed, untill we understand our selves to be so; therefore

Thirdly,

Thirdly, wait Gods leisure with patience, and hold fast to him in all pressures: *Time* (saith Seneca) *is the best Physick for most diseases*, for the body, and so likewise for the soul: if it bee an afflicted conscience, waiting Gods leisure for the assurance of his love, is the best remedy: and so in all other cases.

Section. 10.

Ob. But when will there bee an end of this long disease? this tedious affliction? this heauey yoke of bondage? &c.

Ans. It is a signe of cold love, scarce to have begun to suffer for Christ and presently to gape for an end: It was a far better speech of one, *Lord, give mee what thou wilt, as much as thou wilt, when thou wilt.* Then art Gods Patient, prescribe not thy Physician. It is the *Gold-Smiths* skill to know how long his gold must bee in the Crucible, neither takes hee it out of that hot bath, till it bee sufficiently purified.

What if the Lord for a time forbear coming, as *Samuel did to Saul*; that hee may try what is in thee? and what thou wilt do, or suffer for him, that hath done and suffered so much for thee? as why did God set *Noah* about building the Ark an hundred and twenty years, when a small time might have finished it? It was for the triall of his patience. Thus hee led the *Israelites* in the deserts of *Arabia* forty years; whereas a man may travell from *Ramesis* in *Egypt*, to any part of *Canaan* in forty days: this God did to prove them, that hee might know what was in their hearts, *Deu. 8. 2.* Hee promised *Abraham* a son in whom hee should bee blessed; this hee performed not, in thirty years after. Hee gave *David* the Kingdom, and anointed him by *Samuel*, yet was hee not possessed of it in many years: in so much that hee said, *Mine eyes fail for thy word, Psal. 119. 123.* *Joseph* hath a promise that the Sun and Moon should do him reverence, but first hee must bee bound in the Dungeon. This God doth to try us, for in these exigents we shew our selves, and our dispositions.

What saith God to his people in their misery? *Psal. 75. When I see convenient time, I will execute judgment, ver. 2.* hee doth not say, when you think the time convenient. Let us tarry a little the Lords leisure, deliverance will come, peace will come, joy will come, in mean while to be patient in misery, makes misery no misery.

Again secondly, hee may delay his coming for other ends of greater consequence, *Martha and Mary* send to Christ, as desiring him to come and restore *Lazarus* their sick brother to health, *Job. 11. 3.* expecting him without delay; now hee loved both *Martha* and her Sister, and *Lazarus*, ver. 5. yet hee neglects coming for many days, lets him die, bee put in the grave untill hee stank; but what of all this? he that would not restore sick *Lazarus* to health, restored dead *Lazarus* to life; which was a greater mercy than they either did, or durst ask. Neither did this onely increase their joy, and thankfulness, give them occasion ever after to believe, and hope above and against all hope: but it made many of the Jews believe in him, which before did not, *ver. 45.*

Thirdly and lastly, hee delays thee the longer, that when hee comes, hee

may bring with him the greater recompence of reward : for hee will comfort us according to the days wee have been afflicted, and according to the years that we have seene ill, *Psal. 90. 15.*

Neither will hee stay over-long, for behold, saith he, *I come quickly, and my reward is with me ; to give every man according as his works shall bee, Rev. 22. 12.* and suffering is accounted none of the meanest works. So that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the conquest. Wherefore hold out yet a little, and help shall not bee wanting to the combatants ; nor a crown to the conquerours. Yea, fight to the last minure, for the eye of thy Saviour is upon thee ; if thou faint, to cheere thee ; if thou stand to it, to second thee ; if thou conquer, to crown thee ; whereas no combate, no conquest ; no conquest, no triumph.

Object. But my sufferings are so great, that if they continue, I shall never bee able to hold out.

Ans. True, if thou trustest to thine own strength ; for perseverance is the gift of God ; yea, it is hee that worketh in us both to will and to do at his good pleasure, *Phil. 2. 13.* For first, mans will is a fugitive Gnesimus, and God must call home that runagate, subdue that rebell, before wee can chuse that which is good. Neither when wee have begun, can we continue : *perfecti qui efficit, Hee that begun a good work in us, will perform it, Phil. 1. 6.* Jesus is the founder and finisher of our faith, *Heb. 12. 2.* Neither can wee of our selvs suffer for him : *Datur pati,* it is given to us to suffer for his sake, *Phil. 1. 29.* Without mee yee can do nothing, *Joh. 15. 5.* not *parum*, but *nihil* ; But in him, and through him, all things. *I can do all things through him that strengthens mee, Phil. 4. 13.* In our selvs wee are weak Captives, in him wee are more than Conquerours, *Rom. 8. 37.* Whence it is, many sick men undergo patiently such pressures, as when they were in health, they would not have beleev'd they could have born.

The truth of grace (bee the measure never so small) is always blest with perseverance ; because that little is fed with an everlasting spring. Yea, if grace but conquer us first, wee by it shall conquer all things-else, whether it bee corruptions within us, or temptations without us : for as the fire which came down from heaven in *Elias* time, licked up all the water, to shew that it came from God ; so will this fire spend all our corruptions : No affliction without, or corruption within, shall quench it. Wherefore do but thy endeavour to hold out, I mean with patience (for that Spirit which came in the likeness of a Dove, will not com but upon a Dove,) and pray for divine assistance, this sadness shall end in gladness, this sorrow, in singing.

But above all ; pray unto God, for Prayer is the key of heaven, as Saint Austin tearms it ; and the hand of a Christian, which is able to reach from Earth to Heaven, and to take forth every manner of good gift out of the Lords Treasury. Did not *Elias* by turning this Key one way, lock up the whole Heaven from raining for three years and six months ; and another while by turning the same Key of prayer, as much another way, in the turning

ing of a hand, unlock all the doors and windows of heaven, and set them wide open, that it rained, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

Yea, as all Samsons strength lay in his hair, so all our strength lieth in Prayers; Prayers and tears are the Churches Armour, Prayers and patience her weapons; and therefore when Peter was imprisoned by cruel Herod, the congregation joined their forces to pray for him, and so brake his chains, blew open the Iron Gates, and fetch'd him out, Act. 12. 4. to 18. *Arma Christianorum in adversis, alia esse non debent quam patientia, & precatio* saith Salmeron.

Yea, prayer is so powerfull, that it commandeth all things in Heaven and Earth: It commandeth all the four Elements, Air, Jam. 3. 17. 18. Fire, Ecclesiasticus 48. 3. Dan. 3. 27. Water, Exod. 14. 21. and 15. 25. Earth, Num. 16. 31. 32. 33. Nay, the Prayer of one devout man, is able to conquer an host of enemies in battell, Exod. 17. 11. What shall I say? it hath made the Sea stand still in the Firmament one while, go back another; fetch fire and hail-stones from heaven, thrown down the walls of Jericho, subdued Kingdoms, stopp'd the mouths of Lyons, quencht the violence of fire, &c. Yea, Prayer is so potent, that it raiseth the dead, 1 King. 17. 21. overcometh Angels, Gen. 19. 22. casteth out Devils, Matth. 17. 21. and that which is yet more wonderfull, overcome him that cannot be overcome; and masters even God himself: for doth not the Lord say to Moses, *let mee alone?* And Moses would not let him alone, till he had obtained his petition, Exod. 32. 10. 14. And again to Jacob, wrestling with him, *let mee go:* and Jacob would not let him go, untill he had prevailed, Gen. 32. 16.

Wherefore, Pray upon all occasions and that without doubting: say not to God, as the Laper said to Christ, *If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean:* for hee both can, and will, as that very text, Matth. 8. 2, 3. proves. Yea, I would to God wee were but so willing, as hee is, for hee desires to beee desired: Neither hath hee his own will, except wee have ours. Christ doth ask no more of us, but onely that wee would vouchsafe to ask him. True, the fainting heart that hath waited some time, may with the Psalmist mutter out some such speech, as this, *Hasth God forgotten to beee gracious?* Psal. 77. 9. But if hee forgets any of his, he hath lost his old wour; for who can nominate one that ever came to Christ with any lawfull suit, that received a repulse? Who ever asked any thing of him which was profitable for him to receive, and did not obtain his suit? Did not the sick ever receive their health? The lame, their limbes? the blind their sight? Did ever any sinner implore the forgiveness of his sins, which did not receive full remission and pardon? Yea, did not this our gracious King and Redeemer, prevent his poor miserable subjects with his grace, in giving, before they had the grace to ask; or more then they desired? The sick of the Palsie asking but cure of his disease, received not onely that, but the remission of his sins also, Matth. 9. Zachens desired but to see his face, he became his guest; and gave him salvation to boot, Luk. 19. The woman of Samaria requested but elementary and common water, hee offered unto

her the water of life, *Job. 4.* The people followed him to bee fed by miracle with corporall food, hee offered unto them the bread of life, *Job. 7.* The poor blind man desired but his bodily sight, *Christ* illuminated the eye of his soul, *Job. 9.*

Neither hath *honours* changed manners with him, as is usuall amongst men; for hee is a God *immutable* in goodness, and without change, or shadow of turning, *Jam. 1. 17.* so that if thou speak, hee will hear; and answer thy suit in supporting thee: so that thou shalt bee sure to persevere, and hold out unto the end.

Section 11.

Object. But I have no evidence of divine assistance, nor can I pray for it to purpose.

Answer. Wee have the presence of Gods Spirit, and grace many times, and feel it not; yea, when we complain for want of it, (as *Pilate* asked *Christ* what was truth; when the truth stood before him). The stomach findes the best digestion, even in sleep, when wee least perceive it; and whiles wee are most awake, this power worketh in us, either to further strength, or dis ease, without our knowledge of what is done within; and on the other side, that man is most dangerously sick, in whom nature decays without his feeling, without his complaint. To know our selvs happy is good; but woe were to us *Christians*, if wee could not bee happy, and know it not. As touching Prayer, every one is not so happy as *Steven* was, to bee most fervent when they are most in pain; yea, many in time of sickness (by reason of the extremity of pain) can hardly pray at all: whence *Saint James* wisbeth us in affliction, to pray our selvs; but in case of sickness, to send for the Elders: that they may, as those in the Gospel, offer up the sick person to God in their prayers, beeing unable to present their own case, *Jam. 5. 13. 14. 15.* Yea, it were miserable for the best Christian, if all his former Prayers and Meditations did not serve to aid him in his last fraights, and meet together in the Center of his extremity; yielding, though not sensible relief, yet secret benefit to the soul: whereas the worldly man in this case, having not layed up for this hour, hath no comfort from God, or from others, or from himself.

Besides, thou art happy in this, there is not the poorest and meanest of Gods Children, but as hee hath the benefit of *Christ*s intercession in heaven, *Rom. 8. 34. Job. 16. 26.* so hath hee also the benefit of the Prayers of all the Saints on Earth: wee have the graces and gifts, each of other in common.

Yet, because thine own Prayer is most proper; and seeing it is the mindes Embassage to God, and never faileth of success, if it bee fervent, (as if our prayers want success, they want heart, their blessing is according to their vigor) pray that thou mayest pray better: If thy Leg bee benumbed, go upon it a little, and it will come to it self again. To which if thou join fasting, thou shalt do well; for prayers are made fast with fasting, as *Fertullian* speaks: Yea, pray oft, though thy prayers bee the shorter; weak stomachs which cannot digest large meals, feed oft, and little. O! (saith holy-

holy Bernard most sweetly), *How oft hast thou (meaning prayer) found mee lamenting, and despairing; and left mee rejoicing, and triumphing!*

And what though thou canst not pour out thy soul in a flood of words? The Woman diseased with an issue of blood, said but within her self, shee did not speak to bee heard of others, and yet Christ heard her, and answered her request, *Matth: 9. 21. 22.*

The Lord esteemeth the will for the deed, and the affection for the action; Man sees the countenance, God the heart; man the deeds, but God the meaning. Hast thou but thoughts and desires, and canst thou onely express them with sighs and groans? these speechless words, or rather no words, but a few poor thoughts, conceived aright, pass all the flowing eloquence of Demosthenes and Tully, yea, Tertullus and all the Orators that ever were in the world; for this matter is not expressed with words, but with groanings; and these groanings are from the blessed Spirit. A Father delights more in the stammering of his little Child, than in the eloquence of the best Orator.

Neither is hearty prayer in our own power, but it is the gift of God, which at somtimes in plentiful measure hee bestoweth upon his children, and at other times again hee pulleth back his liberall hand: that by the want thereof, wee may learn to ascribe the glory and praise of this grace to the giver, who worketh in us the will and the deed: which praise otherwise, in pride of heart, wee would arrogate unto our selves, as beeing in our own power. Also that wee may more highly esteem it, and with more joy and diligence use it, when we have it bestowed on us.

If it bee asked why God reckons so highly of a few sighs and groans? and why the prayers of the faithfull are so powerfull? it is, because they bee not ours, but the intercession of Gods own Spirit in us, powred out in the name of Christ, his own Son, in whom hee is ever well pleased: for, as for us, wee know not what to pray as wee ought, but the Spirit it self maketh request for us, with sighs which cannot bee expressed, *Rom. 8. 26.* It is the Spirit whereby wee cry *Abba Father*, *ver. 15. Gal. 4. 6.*

Now if thou wouldest have the Spirits assistance, and bee heard of God, when thou makest supplication to him; do not (as too many do) fall in to prayer without preparation, and utter a number of words without devotion, or affection: for no marvell, if we ask and miss, when we thus ask amiss, *Jam. 4. 3.*

Neither do as Children, which never look after their *ATTON*; but like Daniel, *Dan. 9.* take notice of thine enlargements in prayer, and of thy success after.

Nor onely pray, and no more; for to pray, and to do nothing else, is in effect to do nothing less. But let your Prayers be ushered in, by Meditation, and attend by zealous devotion, and then desiring that you shall receive whatsoever you ask in Christs name, and according to his will, *1 John 5. 14. John 16. 23.* God will bee sure to give you that you desire, *1 John 5. 14. 15. Mark 11. 23. 24.* or that which is better for you, *Deut. 34. 4. 5.*

And suppose thou art not presently heard: yet continue asking still, as Peter continued knocking till the door was opened: for after an ill barrest wee must sow, and after denials wee must wor God. Yea, if it bee possible with the woman of Canaan, let delays, and seeming denials increase the strength of thy cries. And commonly they bee earnest suits which issue from a troubled soul, like strong streams in narrow straights, which bear down all that stands in their way. Nothing so strong as the *Lion of the Tribe of Judah*, for it overcame the roaring *Lion*; yet the *Prayer of Faith*, from the knees of humility, and a broken heart, will conquer even that *Conquerour*, *Matth. 15. 28.*

And thus you see that nothing can befall us without the speciall appointment of our good God, who not only takes notice of our sufferings, but sweeteneth them with his presence, takes our part, stints our enemies, and so ordereth the whole, that our grief is either short or tolerable; and that though hee is oftentimes harsh, in the beginning, and progress, and late in coming; yet hee comes on the sudden, and is always comfortable, in the conclusion. And lastly, that if hee defer his help, it is on purpose that our trials may bee perfect, our deliverance welcome; our recompence glorious. And may not this comfort thee?

CHAP. 39.

That stripes from the Almighty, are speciall tokens and pledges of his adoption and love.

Wee shall bear the cross with more patience and comfort, if wee consider, that stripes from the Almighty are so far from arguing his displeasure, that contrariwise there are no better tokens and pledges of his Adoption and love: As many (saith God) as I love, I rebuke, and chasten, *Rev. 3. 19.* My Son (saith the Author to the Hebrews, out of *Solomons Proverbs*) Despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth, hee chasteneth; and hee scourgeth every son whom hee receiveth. If you endure chastening, God offereth himself unto you, as unto sons: for what son is it whom the Father chasteneth not? If therefore ye bee without correction, wherof all are partakers; then are ye bastards, and not sons, *Heb. 11. 3. to 13. Prov. 3. 11. 12.* Hee is a Thistle, and not good Corn, that cometh not under the flail. Yea, what use of the grain it self, if it pals not the edge of the sickle, the stroak of the flail, the wind of the Fan, the weight of the millstone, the heat of the oven.

Many a mans felicity driveth him from God; and where happiness doth miniseth, virtue is commonly banished. And doth not experience shew, that fear and joy, sweet and sour, sharp and flat, one with another, do better than either alone: for if you bee too harsh, you make the child a fool; if too fond, a rascal. The bridle governs the horse, the spur quickens him; the weight upon the line makes the Jack go, the pill upon the wheel makes it go easy, and nimble: The sails give the speed, the ballast steadiness to the motion of the ship. And likewise God weighs out to

us our favours and crosses in an equall ballance; and so tempers our sorrows, that they may not oppress; and our joys, that they may not transport us. Each one hath some matter of envie to others, and of grief to himself.

Thou dealest mercifully with us, lest wee should fall from thee, and despair; thou beatest us, lest wee should forget thee, and so perish, (saith Saint Austin) Hee that knows our frame, knows wee are best when wee are worst, and live holiest when wee are miserablest: wherefore by affliction kee separates the sin, that hee hates, from the sinner, whom hee loves; and wee are by much the better for this scouring. It is the wont of Fathers to hold in their Children, when they suffer the children of bond-men to go at large, and do as they list; yea, when diverse children are playing the waucons, if wee see a man take one from the rest, and whip him soundly; we conclude that alone to be his Child. Yea, wise and discreet Fathers will force their Children earnestly to apply themselves to their study, or labour; and will not let them bee idle, although it bee holy-day: yea, constrain them to sweat, and oftentimes to weep, when their Mothers would let them on their laps, and keep them at home all day in the shadow, for burning their whips. Jacob is bound Apprentice, while prophane Esau rides a hunting: of Elkanah his two wives, Hanna was in more esteem with God, yet barren, and Peninah less, yet shee was fruitful 1 Sam. 1. They were all gross inconsequencies; for Gedeon to argue Gods absence by affliction, his presence by deliverances, and the unlikely-hood of success, by his own disability, *Judg. 6. 13. 15.* (It is no argument, that Christ is not in the Ship: because tempests, and storms arise.) The valiant man was here weak; weak in faith, weak in discomrte; for rather should hee have inferred Gods presence upon their correction; for wheresoever God chastiseth, there hee is; yea, there hee is in mercy; nothing more proves us his, than his stripes; hee will not bestow whipping, where hee loves not a fond nature indeed, thinks God should not suffer the wind to blow upon his dear ones, because her self makes this use of her own indulgence; but none (out of the place of torment) have suffered so much, as his dear Children. If hee had said wee are idolaters, therefore the Lord hath forsaken us, because wee have forsaken him; instead of, the Lord hath delivered us unto the Medianites, therefore hee hath forsaken us; the sequell had been as good, as now it's faulty; for his, not afflictions, argue God absent: Yea, commonly, the measure of our sufferings is according to the measure of grace in us, and Gods love to us; Hee is a chosen vessell unto ones (saith God to Ananias touching Paul;) therefore hee must suffer great things for my sake, *Act. 9. 15. 16.* Job, for a righteous and upright man, had no fellow; by the testimony of God himself, *Job 1. 8.* Yet the next news we hear of him, Job is afflicted in his substance, in his body; from the crown of the head, to the sole of the foot. Saint Austin, when God called him, was far more assaulted by Satan, than Alippius; because God had endued him with greater learning and gifts, and intended him an instrument of bringing more glory to his Name. And lastly, as Christ was

annointed

anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, Psal. 45. 7. so hee was anointed with the oil of sadness above his fellows: as was his back, so was his burden; as were his parts, so were his passions, and his strength, answerable to his strength.

Never any have had so bitter draughts upon earth, as those he loves best: and that of Saint Austin, is a sure rule, whom God smites not; hee loves not: If hee do not think thee worthy of his Rod, he will never think thee worthy of his Crown. Yea, where he uses not the Rod, he means to use the Sword. Never was Jerusalems condition so desperate, as when God said unto her, My fury shall depart from thee, I will be quiet, and no more angry, Ezek. 16. 42. It was not to be angry, was the greatest anger of all. Never were the Jews more to be pitied, than when their Prophet delivered these words from the Lord, why should yee be stricken any more? Isa. 1. 3. Not to be afflicted, is to be forsaken: And as the sick man is in small hope of his life, when the Physitian giveth him over; so his soul is in a desperate case, whom God forbearth to chastise for his sins. As many there be, who never knew what any sorrow meant, unless it were such as Amans, such as Ababs, when they are crossed in their corruptions, curbed in their lewd courses, or restrained of their wicked wills. But let them take it for a fearfull signe of some sore judgement to come: Saint Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, as Paulinus relates, took into a Rich mans house as hee travelled, who, that he might bid him throughly welcom, entertained him both with great cheer, and curteous discourses: and amongst other matters, told of his continued happinets, and that hee never sufficed any ill all his days, but had all things as hee would, and happiness so flowing in upon him, that hee knew not what calamity meant: which conference did so startle Saint Ambrose, that presently hee took his leave, telling his company that hee feared to stay in that place, which never felt any disaster; and was no sooner gone thence, but suddenly the house fell down, and proved a grave to all her inhabitants. Polycrates, King of the Samians, never felt any ill all his life, his hopes never fell short of his expectation, he could not wish for the thing which was not fulfilled; what hee willed, hee did: Yea, having but once a Ring of excellent rarity that fell into the water, this loss was recovered; for the Fish was taken which had swallowed it, and was presented to Polycrates: but at length all this his happiness epilogized in a gallies. None more happy than great Pompey all his life, yet at last hee was made to drink his own blood by the hands of the Executioner. Who but Andronicus, Emperour of the East for many years? but at length hee was set upon a scabbed Chamell, with a Crown of Onions platted on his head, and in great mockery carried in triumph through the City: And does not sacred Wit certifie, how Haman, whose command ere while almost reached to Heaven, was instantly adjudged by the King to the Gibbet; while Mordecai who was condemned to the halter, was all of a sudden made second in the Kingdom.

Nevertheless, as Haman rejoiced in his preferment to the Queens Banquet, which was the path way to his destruction: so, many think it the onely

argument of Gods love, and that they are in favour with him, because they prosper in all their ways : which would make a wise man the more suspicious, for, (as Seneca that wise Roman saith) he that hath been longest happy, shall at length have his portion of misery ; and who so seemeth to bee dismissed, is but deferred.

And commonly their change is not more dolefull, than sudden ; for as it often hapneth, that in very fair weather a storm doth arise ; and as I have read of certain Trees, which on Monday have been growing in the Forrest, and before Sunday following, under sail on the Sea : so the same hour hath seen the knee bowing to the head ; and again, the head flooping, and doing reverence to the knee, as every age gives instance : for else I might muster up a multitude of examples for proof of the point. Or in case it seems better, yet it is worse with them when their life and happiness shall end together : as it fared with Belshazzar, who was sitting at a Feast merry, while on a sudden, Death came like a Voyder to take him away. And Pope Adrian, who when hee was to dye ; brake out into this expression : Oh my soul, whither art thou going ? thou shalt never bee merry again.

Neither are men of this world, whose bellies God filleth with his true treasure, upon occasion of their outward prosperity, onely apt to bee brought into a fools Paradise, of thinking themselves to bee the speciall darlings of God : but even the godly themselves have oftentimes their eyes so dazzled, with the outward glittering and flourishing estate of the wicked, that thereupon they are ready to say of them, The generation of Gods children, as it fared with David, Psal. 73. 15. But these are not sober thoughts, yea, they are rather the dreams of men, drunk with the love of the world : for although it bee as common a phrase, as it is foolish, when any great matter falls to a man, O he is made ! yet experience proves, that it rather murrers than makes him ; for not seldom do men possess riches, as sick men do fevers, which indeed rather possess them. And certainly, if riches were such pearls, as most men esteem them, it is not likely the Lord would cast them to sub Swine, as mostly hee doth : If such happy things, hee would not throw them to such Dogs. As what saith Luther of the whole Turkish Empire ? It is but a crum of bread, which the master of the house, throweth to his Dogs. And the truth is, what men think most pleasing, (viz. to have their wills, and their lusts granted) is most plaguing, Psal. 81. 11. So I gave them up unto their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels ; so that the greatest temptation, is to bee without temptation : and the greatest affliction, not to be afflicted, 2 Cor. 12. 7.

Wherefore lift up your hands which hang down, because of some sore affliction, and your weak knees, Heb. 12. 12. and know, that the worst of temporall afflictions, are an insufficient proof of divine displeasure : yea, that stripes from the Almighty, are tokens of his love, and seals of his Sonship.

Yea, since hee that hath most grace, commonly complains of most discomfort, confesse that the palate is but an ill Judge of the favours of God : as it is

in great love no doubt, however it bee taken, that the tender Father medicines his Child for the Worms, gives him *Aloes*, or the like: the Child cries, and spouts, and keekes, as if it were poisoned, yet still the Fathers love is never the less: say it be bitter, yet *bitter potions* bring sweet health, and who will not rather take a vomit, then hazard life? In the Sweating sickness in England, their friends would stand by them and strike them over the faces with sprigs of *Rosemary*, to keep them awake: the poor sou's faint, and full of pain, would cry out you kill mee, but yet they must do it, or else they kill'd them indeed: for all that slept, dyed. Look wee (saith Saint Ambrose) with the eyes of our body, upon *Lazarus* estate, and wee think it miserable; but, if with the eyes of the mind, it will bee otherwise; for how did the Angels do by him? but as Nurses are wont to do by their little children, all the day long they carry them about in their arms, and at night they lay them down in their beds to rest.

But the supernaturall works of God, when wee look upon them with our own eyes, are subject to a dangerous mispision; the Sun-beams, to whom wee are beholding for our sight, if wee eye them directly, blind us. Miserable men! we are ready to suspect truths, to run away from our safety, to bee afraid of our comforts, to mis-know our best friends.

Wee usually think it a great sign of Gods displeasure, when hee ruins our estate, and brings us to nothing; when hee in his wisdom knows, that these riches would shipwrack the soul, were they not cast over-board: and his love onely forces him to it. A Mother seeing her little Son bruised at by *Turkey-cocks* catcheth him up, and strippeth him of his red coat, at which those Eies des are offended; the child cries for his coat, but shee regarding his good, letteth him weep, but satisfieth him not. And the like of Enemies, wee think our selvs mightily wronged by them: But God finds it to fare with us, as it doth with the Oak, which gains by the maims and wounds given it, and thereupon spreadeth out thicker than before. Whence it is, God suffers them to live, and domineer, as some Countreies suffer Ravens, enacting Laws to prohibit the killing of them; that they may devour the Carrions, which else would corrupt the air. And so in all other trials: for, hee the root of this wee never so bitter, yet the fruit is pleasant. Well may wee catch a maim as *Jacob* did, but such a blessing cometh withall, that wee would not (if wee) bee without it. Say it bee a sore and fiery trial, yet better tis to purge us, than Hell fire to burn us. But all the skill is in making men see this; wherefore hee that opened the eyes of *Paul*, open ours.

But furthermore, as not to bee afflied, argues an absolute defect of goodness; so if our troubles bee light and few, it is because wee are weak and tender, for therefore God imposeth no more upon us, because hee sees wee can bear no more: The Physician will not suffer a milke-sop to see his vein opened, but makes him wink or look another way: The Master giveth not to his sick servant strong meats, as hee doth to the rest, but more dainty fare; nor because hee is worthier than the rest, but because hee is weaker, and in greater need. The skilfull Armourer tryeth not an ordi-

dingy Peerce with market-shot. The wise Lapidary brings not his softer stones to the Strichy.

So that freedom from affliction is not a signe of potency, but of impotency. Wherefore, when I am stronger, I will look for more; when I am a vessell fit for this strong and new wine, I shall bee filled with it; but not before, Mark 2. 22.

Indeed, the calling of God never leaves a man unchanged, nor does hee employ any in his service, whom hee does not enable to the work hee sets them about. Will any make choyce of a weak Champion? no more will God: hee will either find us fir, or make us fit to discharge the place hee puts us in; as when hee called Saul to bee a King, hee gave him a Kings heart, 1 Sam. 10. 9 And when hee called the Apostles to that function, hee gave them gifts answerable; so when hee calls any to suffer for him, hee fit Martyrdom; hee giveth them the courage of Martyrs, as the times of Queen Mary, witness. But yet for the most part hee trains us up by degrees; (as we eat diverse things by morsels, and easily digest them; which if we should eat whole, would choak us) and doth not make us fit to undergo great matters on a suddain. Wee must learn to fence in the School, before wee fight in the Field; and with wooden weapons men learn to fight at the sharpe: wee must encounter with some beasts or other, (I mean unreasonable men) before wee fight with that fearfull Goliath, death. And indeed, if wee do not learn to give entertainment to smaller crosses, the harbingers, messengers and servants of death; how shall wee bee able to entertain the Lord and Master, when hee cometh? Wherefore, as Jehoram said to Jehu, when hee marched furiously; Comest thou peaceably? As if hee should say, if thou comest peaceably, march as furiously as thou wilt: so let us say unto God, provided, thy afflictions and chastisements bee directed to us as messengers of peace, and love; let them march towards us as furiously as thou pleasest, but in any case, let us not bee without confession: for as Mariners at Sea, find, that of all storms, a Calme is the greatest; so wee; that, to bee exempt from misery, is the most miserable condition of all other.

Object. But thou fearest that God hath not pardoned thy sins, and this makes him so severe against thee.

Answer. Many times after the remission of the sin, his very chastisements are deadly; as is elder by Davids example: and Lots, who had a sharp misery clap on the heele of a sweet mercy: for hee that was so beloved of God, that hee saved a whole City, could not save his own Spouse.

When God delivers us from destruction, hee doth not secure us from all affliction. Grace was never given us for a Target against externall evils, Though wee bee not condemned with the world, yet wee may bee chastened in the world. Neither the truth nor strength of Jobs sayth could secure him from the outward and bodily vexations of Satan, against the inward and spiri-
t-
uall, they could, and did prevail: so no repentance can assure us that wee shall not smart with outward affliction; it can prevent the eternall displeasure of God; but still it may bee necessary, and good, wee should

should bee corrected: our care and suit must bee, that the evils which shall not bee averted, may bee sanctified.

CHAP. 38.

That Christ and all the Saints are our Partners, and partakers with us in the Cross; yea, our sufferings are nothing in comparison of theirs.

WE shall bear the Cross with more patience and comfort, if wee consider that Christ and all the Saints are our partners, and partakers therein; yea, thy sufferings are nothing in comparison of what others have suffered before thee. Look upon righteous Abel, thou shalt see his elder brother Cain had dominion and rule over him by Gods appointment, Gen. 4. 7. Yea, in the next ver. thou shalt see him slain by his brother: After him look upon Noah, a most calamitous person as ever lived, as the Chronologer computes him: as for Lot, hee had his righteous soul vexed from day to day. Look upon Job, thou shalt see that miseries do not stay for a mannerly succession to each other, but in a rude importunity throng in at once, to take away his children, substance, friends, credit, health, peace of conscience, &c. leaving him nothing but his wife, whom the Devill spared on purpose to vex him, as the Fathers think: so that in his own apprehension, God was his mortall enemy; as hear how in the bitterness of his soul hee complains of his Maker, saying, *Hee teareth mee in his wrath, hee hateth mee, and gnasheth upon mee with his teeth, he hath broken mee asunder, taken mee by the neck, and shaken mee to pieces, and set mee up for his mark: his Archers compass mee round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare to pour out my gall upon the ground, he breaketh me with breach upon breach, and runneth upon me like a Giant, Job. 16.* Now when so much was uttered, even by a none-such for his patience; what may we think he did feel, and indure? Look upon Abraham, thou shalt see him forced to forsake his Countrey, and Fathers house, to go to a place he knew not, to men that knew not him; and after his many removes, he meets with a famine, and so is forced into Egypt, which indeed gave relief to him, when Canaan could not; shewing, that in outward things, Gods enemies may fare better than his friends: yet he goes not without great fear of his life, which made it but a dear purchase; then he is forced to part from his brother Lot, by reason of strife and debate among their Heardsmen: after that; Lot is taken prisoner, and he is constrained to wage warre with four Kings at once, to rescue his Brother; then Sarah his wife is barren, and he must go childlesse, untill (in reason) he is past hope: when he hath a Son, it must not onely die, but himself must slay him: Now if that bosom wherein we all look to rest, was assaulted with so many sore trials, and so diverse difficulties, is it likely we should escape? Look upon Jacob; you shall see Esau strive with him in the wombe, that no time might be lost; after that you shall see him flee for his life from a cruel Brother, to a cruel Uncle; with a staffe goes hee over Jordan, alone, doubtful, and comfortlesse; not like the son of Isaac.

In the way he hath no bed, but the cold earth; no pillow, but the hard stones; no sheet, but the moist air; no Canopy, but the wide Heaven: at last he is come far to finde out an hard friend, and of a Nephew becomes a servant; after the service of an hard Apprenticeship, hath earned her whom he loved; his wife is changed, and he is not onely disappointed of his hopes; but forced to marry another against his will, and now he must begin another Apprenticeship, and a new hope, where he made account of fruition: all which fourteen years he was consumed with heat in the day, with frost in the night: when he hath her whom he loves, she is barren: at last, being grown rich, chiefly in wives and children, accounting his charge, his wealth, he returns to his Fathers house, but with what comfort? Behold, Laban follows him with one troop, Esau meets him with another; both, with hostile intentions: not long after, Rachel, the comfort of his life, dieth; his children, the staffe of his age, wound his soul to death: Reuben proves incestuous, Judab adulterous, Dina is ravished, Simeon and Levi are murderous, Er and Onan are stricken dead, Joseph is lost, Simeon imprisoned, Benjamin (his right hand) endangered, Himself driven by famine in his old age, to die among the Egyptians; a people that held it abomination to eat with him: And yet before he was born, it was, Jacob have I loved, and before any of this befell him, God said unto him, Be not afraid, I am with thee, and will do thee good, Gen. 28. 15. And did so, even by these crosses; for that's my good (saith the Proverb) that doth me good. Now what Son of Israel can hope for any good daies, when he hears his Fathers were so evil? It is enough for us, if when we are dead, we can rest with him in the Land of Promise. Again, hear what David saith of himself; Thy arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore, Psal. 38. 2. And see what cause he had so to say; what were these Arrows? To let passe those many that Saul shot at him, which were sharp and keen enough: and those other of Doeg, when he slew fourscore and five of the Priests, and the whole City of Nob, both man and woman, child and suckling, for shewing him kindness: Likewise Shimei's carriage towards him; also his distresse at Ziglag, and those seventy thousand which perished by the Pestilence, upon his numbering the people, and the like. First, Nathan tells him from the Lord, that the sword should never depart from his house; and that he would raise up evil against him out of his own loins: here were as many Arrows as words. Again, the child which he had by Bathsheba was no sooner born, but it died, there was another Arrow: Tamar his daughter being marriageable, was deflowered by his own Son Amnon: there was two more: Amnon himself, being in drinke, was killed by Absalom at a Feast; there was another: This Absalom proves rebellious, and riseth in Arms against his own Father, & makes him fly beyond Jordan, there was one more: He lieth with his Fathers Concubines in the sight of all Israel, there was another: And how much do you think, did these Arrows wound the Kings heart, and pierce his very soul? Lastly, look upon Lazarus, though Christs besome friend? Job. 1. 1. then shalt see him labour under a mortal disease,

&c. though many souls were gained to the Gospel, and cured by his being sick: *Si amatur* (saith Saint Austin) *quomodo infirmatur*.

Thus it were easie to shew the like of Joseph, Jeremy, Daniel, John Baptist, Peter, Paul, and all the generation of Gods Children, and servants: For as the Apostle giveth a generall testimony of all the Saints in the Old Testament; saying, That some endured the violence of fire, some were rack'd, others were tried by mockings and scourgings, bonds and imprisonments; some stoned, some hewen in sunder, some slain with the sword, some wandred up and down in Sheep-skins, and Goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, and tormented; some forced to wander in wildernesses, and Mountains, and hide themselves in Dens, and Caves of the earth, being such as the world was not worthy of, Heb. 11. So Ecclesiasticall History gives the like generall testimony of all the Saints in the New Testament, and succeeding ages; for we read that of all the Apostles, none dyed a naturall death save onely Saint John, and hee also was banished by Domitian to Patmos: and at another time, thrust into a Tun of seething Oil at Rome; as Tertullian, and Saint Jerome do report. As for other believers, there was such a multitude of them suffered Martyrdom for professing the Gospel; wherof some were stoned, some crucified, some beheaded, some thrust through with spears, some burnt with fire, and the like; (for wee read of twenty nine severall deaths they were put unto) that Ecclesiasticall History makes mention of, two thousand which suffered the same day with Nisanor. And after that, in the time of the Ten persecutions, were such an innumerable company of innocent Christians put to death, and tormented; that Saint Jerome, in his Epistle to Chromatius and Heliodorus, saith, There was not one day in the whole year, unto which the number of five thousand Martyrs might not bee ascribed; except onely the first day of January, who were put to the most exquisite deaths and torments, that ever the wit or malice, of Man or Devils could invent to inflict upon them. Since which time, the Turke and the Pope have acted their parts in shedding the blood of the Saints, as well as the Jews and Roman Emperours, as appears in the Book of Acts and Monuments, and Rev. 17. where the holy Ghost hath foretold, that the Whore of Babylon should fight with the Lambe, and they that are on his side, called, and chosen, and faithfull, untill shee were even drunk with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the Martyrs of Jesus; which in part was fulfilled in England, under the Reign of Queen Mary: when in one year a Hundred seventy six persons of quality were burnt for Religion, with many of the common sort, and in France, where before theselate bloody Massacres, there were two Hundred Thousand which suffered Martyrdom, about Transubstantiation. And it is well known, that our Saviour Christs whole life, even from his Cradle to his Grave, was nothing else but a continued act of suffering; yea, hee was the person, upon whom, as upon one Center, all our sorrows met: Hee that had all, possessed nothing, except the punishment due to our sin, which lay so heavy upon him for satisfaction; that it pressed his soul as it were to the nethermost Well, and made him cry out

in the anguish of his spirit, *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken mee?* So that there is nothing befalls us, but hath befallne our betters before us: and to bee free from crosses and afflictions, is the priviledge onely of the Church triumphant. For, *qui non est Crucians, non est Christianus*, saith Luther: *there is not a Christian, that carries not his Cross.* It is onely *Heaven*, that is above all windes, storms and tempests: Now such God (saith Bernard) call men out of *Paradise*; for him to think to find out another *Paradise* in this world.

Now the way not to repine at those above us, is to look at those below us; we seldom or never see any man served with simple favours. It is not for every one to have his soul suck'd out of his mouth with a kisse, as the Jew tell of *Moses*.

It is a great word that *Zaccharie* speaks of *Apolloni*, that hee never asked any thing of God in all his life, that hee obtained not. This is not our *Paradise*, but our *Purgatory*; not a place of pleasure but a *Pilgrimage*; not a *Triumph*, but a *Warfare*. Wee cannot say of this world as *Tully* reports of *Syracuse* in *Sicily*, and others of *Rhodes*, that not one day passeth in which the *Sun* shines not clearly on them. Yea, wee think hee speaks well, that lives as it were, under a perpetuall *Equinoctiall*, having night and day equall, good and ill success in the same measure: for these compositions make both our crosses tolerable, and our blessings wholesome. Wee that know not the afflictions of others, call our own the heaviest; every small current is a torrent, every brook, a River; every River a Sea: wee make our selves more miserable than wee need, than wee should, by looking upon our miseries in a multiplying glasse; wee measure the length of time, by the sharpness of our afflictions, and so make minutes seem hours, and days months. If wee bee sick, and the *Physician* promises to visit us to morrow with his best relief: with what a tedious longing do wee expect his presence? Our imagination makes every day of our sorrows appear like *Josuah's day*, when the *Sun* stood still in *Gibeon*. The Summer of our delights is too short: but the winter of our affliction goes slowly off. Wee are so sensible of a present distress, and so ingratefull for favours past, that wee remember not many years health so much, as one days sickness: it is true, former meals do not relieve our present hunger, but this cottage of ours ruins straight, if it be not new daubed every day, new repaired. What then? Shall to-days *Ague*, make us forget yesterdays health? and all Gods former favours? if hee do not answer us in every thing: shall wee take pleasure in nothing? Shall wee slight all his blessings, because in one thing hee crosseth us, whereas his least mercy is beyond our best merit? But if wee think of our deliverance from the fire of *Hell*, this is cause enough to make us both patient and thankfull; though the trials wee delight in bee taken from us. Lord take away what thou pleasest for thy glory and my good, so long as thou savest mee from the fire of *Hell*, and thy everlasting wrath. Neither is there a better remedy for impatience, than to cast up our receipts, and to compare them with our deservings. If thou lookest upon thy sufferings, thou shalt find them far easier than thy sin have deserved.

deserved; nothing to what thy fellow Saints, and Christ, thy elder brother hath suffered before thee: as a Lyons den, or a fiery furnace; not to turn taile, were a commendation worthy a Crown: do but compare thy own estate with theirs, and thou shalt find cause to bee thankfull that thou art above any, rather than of envy or malice, that any is above thee, to domineer and insult over thee: Yea, compare thine own estate with thine enemies, thou shalt see yet greater cause to bee thankfull; for if these temporary dolours which God afflicts his people with, are so grievous to thee; how shalt thou and Gods enemies (though they suggest to themselves that God is all mercy, as if hee wanted the other hand of his justice) endure that devouring fire, that everlasting burning? Isa. 33. 14. Psal. 68. 21. Doth he make bloody ways on the backs of his Children? and shall bastards escape? doth hee deal thus with his Sons; what will hee do with his Slaves? Can not all the obedience of his beloved ones bear out one sin against God, as wee see in Moses, David, Zachary, &c. Where will they appear that do evil, and only evil, and that continually? The meditation wherof may bee of some use to thee: Thales being asked how adversity might best bee born? answered, By seeing our Enemies in worse estate than our selves.

CHAP. 39.

That the more wee suffer here (so it bee for righteousness sake) the greater our reward shall be hereafter.

Firstly, wee shall bear the Crosse with more patience, and comfort; if, with Moses, wee shall have respect unto the recompence of reward, which is promised to all that (notwithstanding what they shall suffer) persevere in well doing: Great are our tryals, but salvation in heaven will one day make amends, when we shall have all tears wiped from our eyes, when wee shall cease to grieve, cease to sorrow, cease to suffer, cease to sin; when God shall turn all the water of our tears, into the wine of endless comfort; Yea, when our reward shall bee so much the more joyous, by how much more the course of our life hath been grievous.

First, see what promises are made to suffering; Blessed are they which mourn, saith our Saviour, for they shall bee comforted, Matth. 5. 4. Blessed are they which suffer persecution for righteousness sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven, ver. 10. They that suffer here for well-doing, shall bee Crowned hereafter for well-suffering. Blessed shall you bee when men revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you for my sake, saith, Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven, ver. 11. 12. And nothing wee suffer here, can bee compared either with those woes we have deserved in Hell, or those joyes wee are reserved to in Heaven.

When Marcus Marcellus, who was the first that saw the back of Hannibal in the field, was asked how hee durst enter into battaile with him? hee answered, I am a Romane boy, and a Souldier, and by him I shall make my renown everlasting: How much more should the hope of life immortall, which is the life of our lives, mortall, whet our souls, and encourage us in the

the Christian warfare? And so it hath done with thousands: Origen was so earnest to suffer with his Father, when hee was but sixteen years of age, that if his Mother had not kept his cloaths from him, hee would have run to the place where his Father suffered; so pleased himself a Christian, and to have suffered with him: which was a common thing with the Martyrs, making all hast, lest they should miss of that noble entertainment.

Yea, it hath not onely been common for men in a bravenry, to encounter death for a small flash of shinous; but you shall see a braver for his venture his life for his new master, that will sacrifice him his wages at his own end. And can wee suffer too much for our Lord and Master? who gives thereby one that serveth him, not Falsely and Perverly, as Scholprentended, I say, a Nor Towns and Cities, as Discern is pleased to boast of, as for it but even an hundred-fold more than once part withall in this life, and everill man's on in Heaven, John 4. 4. Therefore Baril, when hee was offered money and preferments to tempt him, answered, Can you give me money that can last for ever? and glory that may eternally flourish? And certainly nothing can bee too much to endure, for those pleasures which endure for ever. Yea, if the love of gain makes the Merchant refuse to be tempted of Sea: if the sweetness of honey makes the Bees break in upon thorns, concerning the stings; Who would nought heaven at any rates at any cost or trouble whatsoever? But to go on, Behold, saith God, it shall come to pass, that the Devill shall cast some of you into prison, that you may bee tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days, yet fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer. For he hath thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the Crown of life, Rev. 2. 10. And againe, blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for whosoever is tried he shall receive the Crown of life, Jam. 1. 12. A Crown without cares, without heats, without any, without out-ride.

Now if you consider it,

The gain without hardness makes it far less hard.

The danger's great, but so is the reward.

The sight of glory future, mitigates the sense of misery present. For if Jacob thought not his service tedious, because his beloved Rebeckah was in his eye; what can be thought grievous to him, that hath Heaven in his eye? Adianus seeing the Martyrs suffer such grievous things, hee asked why they would endure such misery, when they might (by retreating) free themselves; to which one of them answered that text, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor can the number be reckoned, and seeing them suffer so cheerfully, did so convert him; who afterwards free became a Martyr.

Lastly (not to enlarge myself, as I might in promises of reward) whosoever shall forsake Houses, or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or wife, or Children, or Lands, for my name sake; he shall receive an hundred-fold more, and shall inherit everlasting life Matth. 19. 29. This is a treasure

worthy our hearts; a purchase worth our lives. Wherefore, eye not the stream thou wast through; but the firm Land thou tendest to.

And indeed, who is there that shall hear these promises, and compare the seed-time with the harvest? look up from the root to the fruit, consider the recompence of the reward: we will not choole rather to suffer adversity with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season, Heb. 11. 25. Who will not bee willing to suffer with Christ, that hee may also reign with him? 2 Tim. 2. 12. Who will not suffer these light afflictions which are but for a moment, when they cause unto us a far more excellent and everlasting weight of glory? 2 Cor. 4. 16. 17. Was Lazarus for a time a wretched miserable? hee is now in Abrahams bosom. Yea, blessed Lazarus, thy sorres and sorrows soon ceased, but thy joys are everlasting. Now mee thinke if thou but considerest that thy pain will shortly pass, but thy joys shall never pass away; it should prove a notable sovereign Cordiall to strengthen thee; not onely against reproaches which attend thy profession, but even against fire and faggot. Who would not hee a Philot for a month, job a Lazarus for a day, or a Stephen for an hour, that he might be in Abrahams bosom for ever? nothing can bee too much to endure, for those pleasures which endure forever.

It is true, if in this life we had lipt in the flame more of all men the most miserable, as the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. 13. 12. But thou must consider, that in this life is our Hell, and the wicked Heavens, Job 18. 20. So the next life shall bee their Hell, and our Heavens, ver. 21. 23. Prov. 16. 4. As Dicer was in Abrahams bosom, when Lazarus was in torments; so Lazarus was in Abrahams bosom, when Dicer was in torments, Luk. 16. ver. 23. 29. And herein was there no work, than Christ? Did not his spirit pass from the Cross into Paradise? Did not hee first descend into Hell, and thence bid his apostles? Suppose thy sufferings bee great, what then? Assure thy self, that every pang is a pre-vention of the pains of Hell, and every respite, an earnest of Heavens rest; and how many stripes dost thou esteeme Heavens worth? It is true, flesh and blood is so sensual, that it feels a little pain in the finger, a great deal more than the health of the whole body. But let us better consider on it, and behold at once the whole state of a Christian; wee shall see his flesh exceed his paines; yea, wee shall see both the torments present, and the glory followinge. Hope maketh absent joyes, present; yea, maketh present pleasures, and bequills calamities, as good company doeth, the way. The poor traveller, in thinking of his home, goes on more cheerfully, and the bond-mans in calling, to mind the year of Jubilee. When the Apprentice calls to mind that his years of covenant will soon shortly expire, and then hee shall have his freedom confirmed; the very remembrance thereof maketh many labours seeme sweet, more light; and less grievous unto him: neither doth hee afterwards repent it. Did it ever repent Jacob, when hee came to see his Father, blessing, that hee had endured a long exile, and tedious bondage? Or Joseph, when hee was once made Ruler in Egypt, that hee had formerly been sold thither, and there imprisoned? and hee had never been a Coward, if he had not first been a prisoner.

prisoner: Or did it repent the Israelites when they came to Inhabit the Land of promise, that they had formerly been forty years passing through a forlorn wilderness. Or which of Gods servants did ever repent that they had passed the apprenticeship of their service here, and were now gon to be made free in glory? If so, let us do and suffer cheerfully, patiently, magnanimously, what God imposeth upon us: knowing that after wee have sweated and smarmed but six days at the utmost, then cometh our Sabbath of eternal rest, which will make a mends for all; knowing that death ends our misery, and begins our glory, and a few groans are well bestowed for a Preface to an immortall joy. Let then our eyes bee continually on the joys which follow, and not on the pain which is present; the pain neglected and unregarded cannot bee very discomfortable.

But that there is reward promised to those which suffer in Christs cause, is not all, for our reward shall bee answerable to our sufferings: the greater our sufferings are here, the greater shall our reward bee hereafter, *Matth. 16. 27.* The deluge of calamities may assault us, but they shall exalt us, by our crosses sanctified, weight is added to our Crown of bliss, for according to the measure of our afflictions, God weigheth unto us of his graces, that wee may bee able to bear them, and according to the measure of our graces, hee proportioneth our glory, and future happiness. Suffering for the Gospel is no inferiour good work, and every one shall bee rewarded, though not for, yet according to his works, *Psal. 62. 12. Rom. 2. 6. Rev 22. ver. 12.* The Apostles tell Christ, wee have left all and followed thee, *Matth. 19. 27.* Christ tels them, when I sit on my Throne, ye shall sit on Thronis with mee, ver. 28. They that turn many unto righteousness, shall shine as the stars in the Kingdom of heaven, *Dan. 12. 3.* And they that suffer Martyrdom, shall bee clothed with long white Robes, and have Palms in their hands, *Rev. 6. 9. 11.* Now, there bee three sorts of Martyrs, Re-
intentione; *intentione, non re*; *re, non intentione*; in both deed and intention, as was Saint Steven; in intention, not deed, as was Saint John; in deed, not in intention, as were the innocents. But, where the conflict is more hard, the conquest obtained shall be more glorious: for as Chrysostom speaks, According to the tribulations laid upon, and born by us, shall our retribution of glory be proportioned. And persecutors (saith Bernard) are but our Fathers Gold-smiths: working, to add pearls to the Crowns of the Saints.

Yea, ever where more work is done, there more wages is given; and when the fight, or conflict is sharper, and the victory harder, the glory of the triumph is greater, and the Crown of reward more glorious. Whence it was that those Saints in the Old Testament, which were racked and tortured, would not be delivered, or accept of their enemies fair offers, so the end they might receive a better resurrection, and a more glorious reward; *Heb. 11. 35.* Neither would we wish our work easier; or our burthen lighter, if we looked up to the recompence of reward: for it may be well applied here, which was misapplied in the wall of that holy man Job, *we do not serve God for nothing.* Though we must not serve him merely for

reward, as hirelings, nor for fear as servants; but as children, for love.

O that (when we suffer most) we would but meditate and look upon, with the eye of faith, the fulfesse of those joys, and sweetnesse of those pleasures, which (having once finished our course) we shall enjoy at Gods right hand for evermore: *Psal. 16. 11. being such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive: 1 Cor. 2. 9.* For certainly the remembrance thereof, would even raise up our souls from ourselves, and make us contemne and sleight what ever our enemies could do; as it did our fore-fathers: much more to sleight reproaches, which are such bug-bears to a great many. And no marvel, if that which hath made so many contemne fire and faggot, make us contemne the blasts of mens breath.

But I hope enough hath been said, in shewing that our enemies in stead of robbing, enrich us; and in lieu of hurting, pleasure us; sith they greater our graces, and augment our glory; sith if the conflict be more shap, the crown will be more glorious. Wherefore if our trials be small, let us bear them with patience, which makes even great burthens easie; if they bee great and grievous, let us bear them patiently too; since great is the weight of glory that enlureth them: whereas no suffering, no reward; yea, if wee be not chastised here, we shall be condemned hereafter, *1 Cor. 11. 32.* And whether had you rather rejoyce for one fit, or aboves? you would do both, which may not be; you would be both Dives and Lazarus, have happinesse both here and hereafter: pardon me, it is a fond covetousnesse, a idle singularity to affect it: What, that you alone may fare better than the Saints? That God should strow Carpets for your feet onely, to walke upon your Heaven; and make that way smooth for you, which all Patriarchs, Prophets, Evangelists, Confessors, and Christ himself have found rugged, and bloody? Away with this self-love, and come down you ambitious sons of Zebedes; and ere you think of sitting near the Throne, be contented to be called unto the Cup. Now is your trial: Let your Saviour see how much of his bitter potion you can pledge; then shall you see how much of his glory he can afford you. In all Feasts, the comeliest meats are tasted first: be content to drink of his Vinegar and Gall, and after you shall drink new wine with him in his Kingdome. Besides, without some kinde of suffering, how shall your sincerity be approved? Even nature is jocund and cheerful whiles it prospereth, but let God withdraw his hands, no sight, no trust; The mother of Micha, while her wealth lasteth, can dedicate a good part of her silver to the Lord, but now she hath lost it, shee falls a cursing, *Judg. 17. 1, 2, 3.* Cataline, whiles poor, had many seeming virtues, but having feathered his nest, you could hardly say, whether he was most lavish of his money, or of his modesty. But to be equally good in a prosperous, and adverse condition, deservs praise; When our resolution and practice is like that Maids in Plutarch, who being set in the Market to be sold, when a Chapman askt her, Wilt thou be faithful, if I buy thee? said; Yea, that I will, though you do not buy me.

Wee all are never weary of receiving, soon weary of attending; we are ready

ready to shrink from Christ, so soon as our profits or pleasures shrink from us: But if with the Needle of the Compass, in the midst of tempestuous weather, we remain always unmovable, and staied upon one point; it is a signe the Loadstone of the Gospel hath changed our hearts; and we are governed by Christ, as the Needle is by the North-Pole. Wherefore if God should not frame our ward things to thy mind, do thou frame thy mind to endure with patience and comfort what he sends; and this will be an Odour smelling sweet, a Sacrifice acceptable and pleasant to God: yea, herein thou shalt approve thy self with David, a man after God's own heart; and you know, that as David was unto God according to his heart, so was God unto David according to his.

CHAP. 40.

Application of the former grounds.

And so you have the residue of the grounds of comfort, it remains that I should apply them: For this Doctrine, though it be better understood then practised, as Cassandra was better known than trusted: yet being both known, applied, and duly trusted to, will (like the Sun) not onely delight our understandings with its contemplation, but also warm and quicken our affections. Wherefore, is there any weak Christian so whitewashed with Nicodemus, that the reproaches and Persecutions which attend his profession, make him ashamed of Christ, or cause him to think that it is in vain to serve the Lord: whereby he is frighted out of the narrow way that leadeth to life? Let him draw near, for I chiefly direct my speech unto him: Are afflictions and persecutions so necessary and profitable, as hath been shewed? Doth not God onely gain glory by our sufferings? but do they also bring us to repentance, and amendment of life? stir us up to prayer, wean us from the love of the world, keep us alwaies prepared for our enemies assaults, discover whether we are sincere or no, make us humble, improve all Christian graces in us? Is God more specially present with us in afflictions? Cannot our enemies diminish one hair of our heads, without God's special leave and appointment? Hath he promised that we shall not be tempted above our strength? Are these stripes the chiefest tokens and pledges of God's love and adoption? Were none of his children ever exempted from the like? And lastly, shall our momentary sufferings be rewarded with everlasting glory? Yea, shall our glory be increased, as our sufferings have been more? Then let them serve as so many restoratives to thy fainting spirit; yea, lift up thy hands which hang down, and strengthen thy weak knees, Heb. 12. 12. For, I suppose thy fainting and swooning is from fear, and thy fear from doubting, and thy doubting from unbelief, and thine unbelief chiefly from ignorance of these things: and whence is thine ignorance of these, but this? Thou hast never been conversant in the book of God; or if thou hast, thou didst never seriously ponder these Scriptures which have formerly been rehearsed: for hadst thou seriously considered them, thou wouldst not have dared to make that an occasion of grief and prejudice,

which the Spirit of God maketh the greatest cause of joy and confirmation that can be. For, what can be spoken more expresse, direct, and significant? What demonstrations can be given more solid? What Fortifications on bulwarks so strong and safe against the assaults of Satan, and the world? Thou saiest thou art persecuted for well-doing, and therefore thinkest it a strange thing. God saith it is, and ever hath been common to all his children, not Christ himself excepted.

Take notice of these things, (for it is the God of all truth and blessedness that speaks them) and apply them to thy self, as if they were particularly spoken to thee by name; even as when twenty be in a room, where is a fair well-drawn picture; every one thinks the picture looks upon him: and have not more modestie or manners (in leaving those dishes for thy betters) than will do thee good. Be not like a Monkey, which looking in a glasse, thinks he sees another Monkeys face, and not his own: And know withall, that it is no small sin even to doubt, when we have God's command and warrant to secure us.

Thou thinkest thy self miserable; God saith, thou art blessed: Thou saiest, thou art hated of the world; God saith, thou art beloved of Christ; who hath chosen thee out of the world: Thou thinkest it a shame to be reproached; God saith, It is thy glory: Thou grievest at it; God saith, thou hast great cause to rejoice; for it sheweth thee to be born of God, thine enemies to be the seed of the Serpent. Thou saiest, that all things go crosse with thee; God saith, That all things shall work together for the best; it may be the increase of thy temporal happiness: however, that it shall bee for the improvement of thy graces here, for the advancement of thy glory hereafter. Thou thinkest it a sign of displeasure; God saith, it is to thy Enemies, a token of perdition, but to thee, of salvation: Thou thinkest thy self near forsaken; God saith, The spirit of glory, and of God, rests upon thee: Thou saiest, thou shalt one day perish; God saith, that neither things present, nor things to come, shall ever be able to separate thee from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Thou thinkest the Lord doth not hear thee, because he doth not presently answer thee in the things that thou requirest: I tell thee, it were ill for the best of us, if we were permitted to be our own choosers: Let Peter have his desire, and his Master shall not die; so Peter himself, and the whole world had been lost. In unfit supplications we are most heard, when we are repelled: our God often times doth answer our prayers with merciful denials, and most blesteth us in crossing our desires. We may ask either bad things to a good purpose; or, good things to a bad purpose; or, good things to a good purpose, but in an ill season. Now, if we ask what is either unfit to receive, or unlawful to beg, it is a great favour of our God to be denied: granting is not alwaies the effect of love; if so, then had Paul been lesse loved then Satan: Satan begg'd but once, and had his prayer granted, concerning Job: S. Paul begg'd thrice that he might not be buffeted, yet was denied: Satan begg'd his shame; who envied his success? Saint Paul that freedom from temptation, which would have been worse had then wanted: yea, if granting were,

were always an effect of love; then was our blessed Saviour less loved than Satan; for the Lord would not let the *Cup of his Passion* pass from him upon his *earnest prayer*, which he made as he was Man. But you must know, that *denials in some cases* are better than *grants*: the Lord will not take away the body of sin from us upon our *earnest prayers*, yet he granteth us that which is equivalent; viz. *Grace to subdue our corruptions*; and withall takes away the occasion of *pride*, which is better: for certainly he is more supported of God, that hath grace given him to conquer a temptation; as had the *Martyrs*, in being able to suffer those tortures; than another who is *excused to fight*.

Again, we must not *measure God's bearing* of our suit, by his *present answer*; or his *present answer* by our *own sense*: touching the first, *Zachary* a long time failed of a *Son* for all his *Prayer*; but when he had even forgot that *Prayer*, he had a *Son*; the *Angel* brings him good news, *Luk. 1. 13. Thy Prayer is heard*: When did he make this *Prayer*? Not lately; for then he was *grown old*, and had given over all hope of a *child*: so that his request was past over *many years*, and no answer given.

The like example we have in *Hannah*, who pouring out her soul before the Lord, in the trouble of her spirit; God did not immediately tell her by revelation that she should conceive a *Son*, but he gave her for the present, faith; which did work in her joy, and peace of conscience: for (saith the text) she looked no more sad; and when shee had waited his leisure a certain time, *The Lord remembered her with a Son*, 1 *Sam. 1*. There is nothing between God and thee, but time; prescribe not his wisdom, hasten not his mercie, now his grace is enough for you, his glory shall be more than enough hereafter. Tarry a little the Lords leisure, deliverance will come, peace will come, joy will come: thy tears are reserved, thine hunger shall be satisfied, thy sorrow shall be comforted: In the mean while to be patient in misery, makes misery no misery: while we consider that when a little hurt is once past, troubles will cease, but joys shall never cease.

Wherefore, let us never give over, but in our thoughts knit the beginning, progresse, and end together; and then shall we see our selves in Heaven, out of the reach of all our enemies.

2. To prove that wee are not to judge of Gods answering our prayers, by our own sense; I need but to instance the woman of *Canaan*, (as what can speed well, if the prayer of faith from the knees of humility succeed not?) and yet behold, the further she goes, the worse she fares; her discouragement is doubled with her suit: It is not good (saith our Saviour) to take the childrens bread, and cast it to dogs; here was cold comfort: yet stay but a while, he clears up his brows, and speaks to her so comfortably, that 'twere able to secure any heart, to dispel any fears. O Saviour! how different are thy waies from ours, when even thy severity argues favour! The trial had not been so sharp, if thou hadst not found the faith so strong; if thou hadst not meant the issue so happy: It is no unusual thing for kind

ness to look sternly for the time, that it may indeed it self move, when it lists to be discovered.

It was cold comfort that the Chripple heard from Peter and John, when he begg'd of them an alms; *Silver and gold have I none*: but the next clause, *rise up and walk*, made amends for all. O God! we may not alwaies measure thy meaning by thy semblance; sometimes what thou most intendest, thou shewest least. In our afflictions thou turn'st thy back upon us, and hidest thy face from us, when thou most mindest our distresses. So *Jonathas* shot the arrows beyond *David*, when he meant them to him: So, *Joseph* calls for *Benjamin* into bands, when his heart was bound to him in the strongest affection; so, the tender mother makes as if she would give away her crying-child, whom she hugs so much closer in her bosom. If thou passe by us whiles we are struggling with the tempest, we know it is not for want of mercie, thou canst not neglect us: Oh let not us distrust thee! if thou comest, it is to relieve us; if thou stailest, it is to trie us; howsoever, thy purpose is to save us. Surely God will work *some*, and man must not be of his counsel. Wherefore many times he deals with wicked men, as *Edtrapius* sometimes did with his subjects; who when he was minded to do a poor man a mischief, would give him abundance of wealth; whereas contrarily his children find themselves *crossed* with a blessing. *Possidonius* tells us of *Austin*, that when there was waite laid for his life; through God's providence he mist his way; whereby his life was preserved, and his adversaries disappointed. As when *Isabel Queen of England* was to repasse from *Zealand* into her own Kingdom, with an Army, in favor of her Son against her Husband, she had utterly been cast away, had she come unto the Port intended, being there expected by her enemies: but Providence, against her will, brought her to another place, where shee safely landed. Yea, this I have seen, two men striving for the way, one receiving a switch over the face, draws his *Aggyer* to kill the other; but by a providence, in making the offer, his saddle swayed to the horse-belly; whereby in all likelihood, the one was saved from killing, the other from being: for before he could make after him, he was rid a mile. And have not some been detained (by a violent storme) from coming home, whereby they have been exempt from feeling the down-fall of their house? Sure I am the letting fall of my *Glove* in the dark, once proved a means of saving me from drowning; while another stepping before me, found the danger to his cost. And indeed, how infinitely should we intrangle our selves, if we could sit down and obtain our wishes! Do we not often wish that, which we after see would be our confusion; because we ignorantly follow the flesh, and blinded appetite, which looks on nothing but the flesh and outlide; whereas God respecteth the soul, and distributeth his favour for the good of that, and his glory? It is an argument of love in the Father, when he takes away the Childs knife, and gives him a book. Wee cry for riches, or liberty, or peace; they are knives to cut our fingers: therefore God gives us his Word, the riches of verity, not of vanity: Hee gives us that glorious liberty to be the Sons of God, he gives us that peace which

which the world cannot give, nor take away : wherefore let the Christian understand, God his Physician, Tribulation his physick ; being afflicted under the medicine, thou criest, the Physician hears thee, nor according to thy will, but thy weal ; thou canst not endure thy malady ; and wilt thou not be patient of the remedy ? No man would be more miserable, than he that should cull out his own waies : What a specious shew carried Midas his wish with it, and how did it pay him with ruine at last ? Surely I have seen matters fall out so unexpectedly, that they have tutored me in all affairs, neither to despair, nor to presume ; nor to despair, for God can help mee ; nor to presume, for God can crosse me : One day made Marius Emperour, the next saw him rule, and the third he was slain of his Souldiers. Well then, if with Paul thou hast besought the Lord often, that thy present affliction might depart from thee, and canst not be heard in the thing which thou desirest ; know that thou art heard in that which is more conducive to thy profit : and consequently rejoyce more in that thy petition is denied, than if it had been granted. This was the use which Saint Paul made of Gods denial, and he knew what he did, though he had as much to boast, and rejoyce of, as any one living : yet, saith he, of myself I will not rejoyce, except it be, of mine infirmities : that is, afflictions, reproaches, persecutions ; inward temptations, fears, distrust, &c. But in these I will very gladly rejoyce, Why ? That the power of Christ may dwell in me : Note his reason, he had heard God say, that his power was made perfect through weaknesse, 2 Cor. 12. 8, 9. Neither had he onely cause to rejoyce in his infirmities, but all Gods people have the same cause to rejoyce ; for, what the spirit of comfort speaks in this, and in all the former places recited, do equally belong to thee for thy consolation, with all the regenerate ; for whatsoever was written afore-time, was written for thy learning and mine ; that wee through patience, and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, Rom. 15. 4. And accordingly, will a good heaver apply to himself whatsoever is written in the Word ; for as the stomach feeds the strength of the meat into every member of the body : so we should send to the eye, that which is spoken to the eye ; and to the ear, that which is spoken to the ear ; and to the tongue, that which is spoken to the tongue ; and to the hand, that which is spoken to the hand ; and so to the heart, and every faculty and member of soul and body : if we hear comfort, we should apply it to fear ; if wee hear a promise, we should apply that to our distrust ; if wee hear a threatening, we should apply that to our presumption ; and so fill up the gap still where the Devil would enter. And indeed, had it not been for this *Aqua calensis*, David had surely fainted in his affliction, Psal. 137. ver. 13. & 119. 72. but this good Word from heaven fetch him again, when he was ready to sink : and indeed, if Moses and the Prophets, the Evangelists and Apostles will not comfort us in this case, then as Abraham told Dives in another case, nothing will persuade, nor prevail. Believest thou the former Scriptures spoken by Christ, and his Apostles ? I know that thou believest, with some mixture of unbelief ; and art almost perswaded, not onely to do, but to suffer chearfully for well-doing. But why
dost

dost thou not altogether believe, that it is a blessed and happy thing thus to suffer? Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. That thou hast great cause to rejoice and be glad that thou art counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's name? Act. 5. 41. Thou loest it is not for nothing that David acknowledgeth, It was good for him that he was afflicted, Psal. 119. 71. that Job blesteth the time that ever he was corrected, Job 42. That Jeremy praised for correction as a good thing, Jer. 10. 24. That a whole Church voted the same, Lam. 3. 27. It is not for nothing that Christ saith, Blessed and happy are yee when men revile you, and persecute you: That Saint James saith, Count it exceeding joy, when yee fall into divers temptations, James 1. 2. It is not for nothing that Saint Paul saith, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in anguish, for Christ's sake, &c. 2 Cor. 12. 10. That Peter and Job, when they were beaten and imprisoned, departed from the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer rebuke for Christ's name, Act. 5. 41. For, even bearing the Crosse with Christ, is as great a preferment in the Court of Heaven; as it is in an earthly Court or the Prince to take off his own Robe, and put it on the back of one of his servants; as you may perceive by the Lord's speech to Paul, Act. 9. 15, 16. & 23. ver. 11. and our Saviour Christ's words to his Apostles, Act. 1. 8. yes, to suffer for Christ (saith Father Latimer) is the greatest privilege that God gives in this world: and the story of Job is a book-case to prove it: for did not God by him, as sometimes a Schoolmaster with his Pupill, who when he hath polished and perfected a good Scholar, brings him forth, provokes adversaries to set upon him with hard questions, and takes a pride to see the fruit of his own labours. And in the wars; to have the barest and most dangerous services imposed up in them by their General, is accounted the greatest honour: neither will he confer the same upon any, but the stoutest and most valiant. This Rod of the Lord (like Abasurus his Scepter) is never stretcht forth toward any of his, but in great love and favour. It is like the kisse, which Cyrus, in Xenophon, gave to Chrysanthas, which was accounted a greater and more special favour, than the Cup of gold which he gave to Artabazus: Which being so, let us in this particular, imitate the Muscovish women, who will not think their husbands love them, unless they chastise them; and the Indians, who are ambitious to be burnt with them; and the Thracians, who are proud to wear their scars. Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, Heb. 11. 25, 26. And the Apostles esteemed it a grace, to be disgraced for him: and shall we grumble, or think much at it? No: in the greatest extremity of straights, let us acknowledge it a favour, and give him thanks: and so much the rather, for that it is more acceptable to God, to give him thanks once in adversity, then six hundred times in prosperity, as a grave Divine well observs: and indeed, it is the summe of all Religion to be thankful to God in the midst of misery.

True, it is hard for Job, when the thunders of God fight against him, and the arrows of the Almighty stick so fast in him, that the venom thereof hath drunk up his spirit, Job 6. 2, 3, 4. to think it a special favour and dignity,

but so it was, being rightly considered. It was hard for Josephs brethren to hear him speak roughly unto them, take them for thieves, accuse them of theft, and commit them to prison, Gen. 42. 30. and think, it is all out of love; much more hard for Simeon to be sold out from the rest, and committed to ward, while his brethren are set at liberty, Vers. 24. and yet it was so; yea he loved him best, whom he seemed to favour least: yet, such is the infirmity of our nature, that at weak eyes are dazzled with the light which should comfort them, so there is nothing more common with God's children, than to be afflicted with the causes of their Joy, and distressed with that which is intended for their confirmation. Even Manoah conceives death in that vision of God, wherein his Bliss and his Blessing did consist: Judg. 13. 22. And the Shepherds, Luk. 2. who were sore afraid, when the Angel of the Lord came to bring them good tidings of great joy to all people; viz. their Saviours Birth, which was Christ the Lord, Vers. 9. 10. But what hath been the answer of GOD always to his children, in such their extresies, but this? Fear not, Gadon, Judg. 6. 23. Fear not, Joseph, Mat. 1. 20. Fear not, Zachary, Luk. 1. 13. Fear not, Abraham, for I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward; Gen. 21. 1. Fear not, Paul, for I am with thee, and no man shall lay hands on thee to do thee hurt, &c. Acts. 18. 9. 10. the words are often repeated (as Pharaohs dreams were doubled) for the surenesse. Yea, to the end, that we should be fearless in all our sufferings, so long as we suffer not as evil doers, 1 Pet. 4. 15. Fear not, as one well notes, is the first word in the Annunciation of Christs Conception; and the first word in the first Annunciation of his Birth; and the first word in the first Annuntiation of his Resurrection, and almost the last word in his last exhortation, a little before his death, are, Let not your hearts be troubled, and be of good comfort, strengthening his followers, and sweetning his Crosse by averse forcible reason, John 14. 1. And the words of dying men have ever been most emphatical, most effectual: Nay, more than all this, if yet thou wilt not be comforted, look but Job. 16. 22. and thou shalt have thy Saviours assurance by a double bond:

sworn Oath } I say unto you, Verily, verily, I say unto you.

that though for the present you do fear, and sorrow, and weep, yet all shall be turned into joy, for that joy shall no man be able to take from you, v. 22.

And so much of the { Patience
Innocency
Felicity } of the womans seed.

If you will see the { Malice
Subtily
Mystery } of the Serpents seed:

Read the three foregoing parts; viz. { The cause and cure of Ignorance Error, &c.
The cure of Misprision.
Characters of the kinds of preaching.

The last whereof is sold only by James Crump, in Little Bartholomews well-yard.

A PRAYER

A two-fold PRAYER for the Morning and for the Evening, as also ano- ther to be said at any time.

Jer. 10. 25.

*Pour out thy fury upon them that know thee not, and
upon the families that call not on thy name.*

Psal. 145. 18. Rom. 10. 13.

*The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him
in truth.*

Isa. 65. 24.

*Before they call I will answer, and whiler they are yet
speaking I will hear.*

Jer. 33. 3.

*Call unto me and I will answer thee, and shew thee
great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.*

1 Joh. 5. 14.

*If wee ask any thing according to his will, he heareth
us.*

Joh. 16. 23. Mat. 21. 22.

*Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, be-
lieving, he will give it you.*

Psal. 55. 17.

Evening and Morning, and at Noon will I pray.

A Prayer

A PRAYER for the Morning.

O Lord prepare our hearts to Pray.



Most glorious LORD GOD, and in JESUS CHRIST our most merciful and loving Father; in whom wee live, and move, and have our being; in the multitude of thy mercies we desire to approach unto thee, from whom all good things do proceed; who knowest our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking. It is true, O Lord, if we should consider onely our own unworthiness, and how we have heretofore abused thy goodness and long-suffering towards us; wee might rather despair with *Judas*, and like *Adam* run from thee, then dare to approach thy glorious presence. For we confesse, O Lord, to the shame and confusion of our own faces, that

—as we brought a world of sinne into the World with us, and deserved to dye so soon as wee began to live; so ever since that thou hast spared us, we have done nothing but add sinne unto sinne, as thou hast added mercy to mercy: For we have been no lesse rebellious unto thee, then thou hast been beneficiall unto us. We do daily and hourly break all thy commandements, adding unto that our originall corruption which we were conceived and borne in, all manner of actual transgressions, by sins of Omission, sins of Commission, sinnes of Ignorance, sinnes of Knowledge, sinnes against conscience; yea, sinnes of Presumption and Willfulness, and that in thought, word, and deed. We have sinned against thy Law, and against thy Gospel, against thy mercies, and against thy judgments, against the many warnings, and the abundance of means afforded by thee to reclaim us, against the spirit of grace continually knocking at the doors of our hearts, with infinite checks and holy moti-

ons,

—as our first Parents left us a large stock of sinne, so we have improved the same beyond measure; O that we could have so improved that stock of grace which wee have received from thee! But whereas thou gavest us as large a portion, we suddenly lost it. We were created indeed by thee, after thine own image, in righteousness, & holiness, & in knowledge of the Truth: But alas! now our understandings are so darkened and dulled, our judgments so blinded, our wills so perverted, our affections so corrupted, our reason so exiled, our thoughts so surprised, our desires so entrapped, and all the faculties and functions of our souls so disordered, that we are not sufficient of our selves to think, much lesse to speak, least of all to do ought that is good. And yet usually like *Bladders*, we are not more empty of grace, than we are blown up with pride: whereby with *Laodicea*, we not once see our own spiritual misery and nakednesse; but think we are rich and good enough, as wanting nothing; when as scarce

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ours, Our eares have been alwaies open to the Tempter, and unto thee; we have abused our eyes to wantonnesse, our moethes to filthynesse, and our feet have been swift to all evill, slow to ought that is good.

And as wee have committed one sinne on the neck of another, so we have multiplyed, and many times repeated them, by falling often into the same wickednesse, whereby our finnes are become for number, as the sands of the Sea, and as the Stars of Heaven.

Yet

any spark of grace yet appeares in us. Yes, so far have we been from leaving and serving thee, that we have hated those that do it, and that for their so doing. And so far have we been from performing that vow which we made to Christ in our Baptism, when we took his prefection to be his Souldiers, and serve him in the field of this world, against his and our enemies; that we have renounced our vow made to him, and fled from his standard; yea, fought for Satan and the World, seeking to win all we could from Christ, by tempting to sin, and by persecuting such as were better then ourselves; so that all our recompence of thy love unto us, hath been to do that which thou hatest, and to hate those whom thou lovest. Yea, we cannot deny but we have persecuted thee with Paul, denied thee with Peter, betrayed thee with Judas, and crucified thee with those cruel Jews.

Now Lord it being thus with us, how can we expect that thou shouldst hear our prayers, & grant our requests? yea, how can wee look for other at thine hand, then great and grievous, yea, then double damnation? as most justly we have deserved.

Yet most most merciful Father, being that thou hast given thy Son, and thy Son himself for the rancome of so many as shall truly repent, and unfeignedly believe in him, who hath for our sakes fulfilled all righteousness; yea, suffered on the Crosse, and there made full satisfaction for the sins of all thine Elect.

And seeing thou hast appointed Prayer, as one special means for the obtaining of thy grace, unto which thou hast annexed this comfortable promise, that where two or three be gathered together in thy Name, thou wilt be in the midst of them, and grant their requests; and since our Redeemer hath assured us, that

And likewise knowing, that mercie pleaseth thee, and that the sole perfection of a Christian, is the imputation of Christs righteousness, and the non-imputation of his own unrighteousness:

whatsoever we shall ask thee in his name, thou wilt give it us :

We are emboldened to sue unto thee our God for grace, that we may be able to repent and believe.

Wherefore for thy promise sake, for thy Sons sake, and for thy great Names sake, we beseech thee send down thy holy Spirit into our souls, regenerate our hearts, change and purifie our natures, subdue our reason, rectifie our judgments, strengthen our wills, renew our affections, put a stop to our madding and straying fancies; bear down in us whatsoever stands in opposition to the Scepter of Jesus Christ; and enable us in some measure, both to withstand that which is evil, and perform that which is good and pleasing in thy sight.

Yea give us repentance never to be repented of, and possess our souls with such a dreadfull awe of thy Majesty, that we may fear as well to commit small sins as great ones, considering that the least sin is mortall without our repentance, & thy mercy: as well fear to sin in secret as openly, since there is nothing hid from thee: as well condemne our selves for evill thoughts as evill deeds, considering that the Law is spirituall, binding the heart no lesse then the hands; as well abstain from the occasions of sin, as sin it self; and consider that it is not enough, to abstain from evill, unlesse wee hate it also, and do the contrary good.

And now O Lord, since thou hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day, we beseech thee to defend, and direct us in the same: and as thou hast blest us in our lying down, and in our rising up, so protect & prosper us in our going forth, & in our coming home: shield and deliver us from the snares of the Hunter, who lieth in waite for our souls; and is continually labouring our everlasting destruction. And no lesse arm us against the allurements of the world, wherein we shall meet with many provocations, and temptations: and that we may not lead our selves, nor be

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And because every day which does not abate of our reckoning; will increase it; and that by procrastinating, we shall but heap unto our selves wrath against the day of wrath: Good Lord, suffer us not, we beseech thee, to defer our repentance, lest the custome of evill makes it altogether unalterable in us: or lest we dye before we begin to live: or lest thou refusest to hear us another day, calling upon thee for mercy: because we refuse to hear thee now, calling to us for repentance.

Wherefore if we be not yet converted, let this be the happy hour of our conversion; that as our bodies are risen by thy power, and providence from sleep, so our soules may daily be raised from the sleep of sin, and the darknesse of this world; that so we may enjoy that everlasting light, which thou hast prepared for thine; and purchased with the blood of thy dear Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Give unto us, we beseech thee, a true, lively, and justifying faith, whereby we may lay hold upon those gracious promises, which thou hast made unto us in him; and wherewith we may vanquish all our spirituall adversaries. Seal up unto us the assurance of our salvation, by the testimony of thy blessed Spirit. Give to

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led into temptation; give us wisdom to beware of men, even of associating our selves with the vicious, like *Joseph*: lest otherwise with *David*, we be drawn to dissemble: or with *Peter*, to deny thee: for sin is of a carching, and infectious quality: and our corrupt hearts are like tinder, which will kindle with the least spark: especially O Lord, keep us from yeelding to their solicitations, or following their customs, of drinking, swearing, flandering, and making the worst construction of things: of mocking, and scoffing at religion, or the religious: let not custome and example any whit prevail with us, without, or against thy written Word; lest we misse of the narrow way, which alone leadeth unto life: onely give us wisdom, and grace, to look upon thy Sons whole life: & see how he would speak, and do, before we speak or do anything, & then having thy word for our warrant, and thy glory for our aime; let no censures, nor flowts of any discourage us.

Finally, good Father we beseech thee, inable us so to walk in thy fear; that in mirth we be not vain, in knowledge we be not proud, in zeal we be not bitter; instruct us by thy Word direct us by thy Spirit, mollifie us by thy grace, humble us by thy corrections, win us by thy benefits, reconcile our nature to thy will; & teach us so to make profit of every thing, that we may see thee in all things, & all things in thee.

And in these our prayers wee are not mindfull of our selves alone, but forasmuch as thou hast commanded us to pray one for another; as being the members of one and the same mysticall body: wee beseech thee to blesse thy whole Church Universall, wheresoever dispersed, and how-

so ever

us thy servants, that wisdom which descendeth from above, that we may be wise unto our eternall salvation: so shall our hearts (instead of a Commentary) help us to understand the Scriptures, and our lives be an Exposition of the inward man. Give us grace, to account all things in this world even as drosse, and dung, that we may win Christ Jesus; and Heaven and happinesse by means of him. Give us single hearts, and spirits without guile, that wee may love goodnesse for it self, and more seek the power of godlinesse, then the shew of it; and love the godly for thy sake: and because they are godly. Grant that in the whole course of our lives, we may doe unto all others, as we would that they should doe unto us: considering, that whether we do good or evill, unto any one of thy members, thou takest it as done unto thy self. Discover unto us all our own sins, that wee may not be so forward to censure others, as wee have been heretofore. Give us patience to beare thy Fatherly chastisements, which through thy grace sanctifying them to us, become both Medicines to cure us, and Antidotes to preserve us from the sickness of sin: considering, that all the afflictions of this life, are not worthy those joyes which shall be revealed unto us.

And, as we are suiters unto thy Majesty, for these thy blessings spirituall: so likewise we humbly beg at thy mercifull hands, all necessities appertaining to our temporall welfare: beseeching thee to blesse us in our persons, with health, strength, and liberty: in our estates, with sufficiency, and the right use of it; considering that if wee spend what wee

have

soever distressed, or despised, far and wide over the face of the whole earth: and vouchsafe unto thy Gospel such a free and effectually passage, that it may sound throughout all Nations. Yea, wee humbly pray thee, let it convert and reclaim the Turks, Jews, Infidels, Indians, Atheists, Epicures, Hereticks, and Schismaticks. Prevent all plots, and projects against the Kingdome of thy Christ: let thy Word and Spirit alone, bear rule in all places. Extend thy tender mercy O Lord, to all Protestants beyond the Seas; to all Christians under the Turks, or other Infidels: strengthen all such as suffer for thy cause, and let thy presence with them counterpoise whatsoever is laid upon them, and inable them to continue constant in thy faith and truth to the end. More particularly, be good unto that part of thy Church planted here amongst us, in this sinfull Land, and indue us with thy grace as thou hast already with other blessings; that they may not rise up hereafter in judgment against us. be propitious to the Nobility, Gentry, and Commuallty. Bless the Tribe of Levi, all Ministers of thy Word and Sacraments; let their lips, O God, preserve knowledg, and their lives righteousnesse; and for ever bless thou their labours: increase the number of those that are faithfull and painfull; and reform, or remove such as are either scandalous, or idle: and for a constant and continuall supply of their mortality, bless all Schooles of learning, and good literature; especially the Universities. Remember in much mercy all that are afflicted, whether in body, or in mind, or in both; whether in conscience,

710 groaning

have upon our own lusts, we may ask, but wee shall not receive: let our good names, with an unrepreeable report: and so, bless and sanctifie unto us all the things of this life, that they may be furtherances of us in the way to a better.

And seeing that it is in vain for us to labour, except thy blessing go along with it: neither can our endeavours succeed well except thou prosper them: bless every one of us in our several places and callings, and so direct us in all we shall take in hand, that whatsoever wee do, may tend to thy glory, the good of others, and the comfort of our own soules: when wee shall come to make our small account unto thee for them.

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groaning under sin ; or for a good conscience, because they will not sin ; and as thou makest them examples to us, so teach us to take example by them, and learn wisdom by thy hand upon them.

These, and all things else which thou knowest we stand in need of, we humbly crave at thy mercifull hands, and that for the alone worthinesse, and satisfaction of thy son ; and the honour of our onely Redeemer, and Advocate Jesus Christ : to whom with thee O Father, and thy blessed Spirit, be given as is most due, all praise, glory, and dominion, the residue of this day, and for evermore. *Amen.*

A Praier for the Evening, which would be performed before Supper, and not when we are more prone to sleep, then to pray.



Eternal, Almighty, and incomprehensible Lord God ; who art great and terrible, of most glorious Majesty, and infinite purity : Creator, and Preserver of all things, and Guider, and Governour of them being created : who fillest Heaven and Earth with thy presence, and art every where at hand to receive, and hear the prayers of all that repair to thee in thy Christ.

Thou hast of thy goodnesse bestowed so many, and so great mercies upon us, that wee know not how to expresse thy bounty herein. Yea, we can scarce think of any thing more to pray for, but that thou wouldest continue those which thou hast bestowed on us already : yet we covet still, as though we had nothing, and live as if we knew nothing of all this thy beneficence.

Thy blessings are without number, yet our sins strive with them which shall be more : if we could count the numberless number of thy Creatures, they would not be answerable to the number of thy gifts ; yet the number of our offences which we return in lieu of them, are not much inferiour thereunto. Well may we confesse with *Judas*, we have sinned, and there stop ; but we cannot reckon their number, nor set forth their nature. We are bound to praise thee above any Nation what-

We no sooner lived, then we deserved to die ; neither need we any more to condemn us, then what we brought into the world with us : but thou hast spared us to this hour, to try if we would turn unto thee by repentance, as our first Parents, and wee have turned from thee by sin : yet thy mercy seems to have been in vain, and thy long-suffering to no end : For whereas many have been won by thy Word, wee would not suffer it to change us ; many have been reformed by the Crosse, but we

whatsoever : for what Nation under Heaven enjoys so much light , or so many blessings as we ? above any Creature, for all the Creatures were ordained for our sakes : and yet Heaven, Earth, and Sea, all the Elements, all thy Creatures obey thy Word, and serve thee as they did at first : yea, call upon us to serve thee : onely men for whom they were all made , ingratefully rebell against thee.

Thou might'st have said before we were formed ; let them be Toads, Monsters, Infidels, Beggars, Cripples, or Bondslaves so long as they live, and after that, Cast-aways for ever and ever : but thou hast made us to the best likeness, and nursed us in the best Religion, and placed us in the best Land, and appointed us to the best and onely Inheritance, even to remain in blisse with thee for ever : so that thousands would think themselves happy, if they had but a piece of our happinesse.

Why shouldest thou give us thy Son for a rancome, thy holy Spirit for a pledge, thy Word for a guide, thy Angels for our guard ; and reserve a Kingdom for our perpetual inheritance ? Why shouldest thou bestow health, wealth, rest, liberty, limbs, senses, food, raiment, friends, and the means of salvation upon us, more then upon others, whom thou hast denied these things unto ? We can give no reason for it , but that thou art merciful ; and if thou shouldest draw all back again, we had nothing to say but that thou wert just : which being considered, why should any serve thee more then we , who want nothing but thankfulness ? Why should we not hate the Way to Hell, as much as Hell it self ? and why

we would not suffer it to purge us ; many have been moved by thy benefits, but we would not suffer them to perswade us : yea, as if we had contracted with the Divil, that we would abuse all thy gifts so fast as they come : thy blessings make us proud, thy riches covetous, thy peace wanton, thy meats intemperate, thy mercy secure ; and all thy benefits serve us but as weapons to rebell against thee. We have prophaned thy daies, contemned thy ordinances, resisted thy Word, grieved thy Spirit, misused thy Messengers, hated our Reprovers, slandered and persecuted thy people, seduced our friends, given ill example to our Neighbours, opened the mouths of thine and our adversaries , to blaspheme that glorious Name after which we are named, and the truth we profess : whereas meaner mercies, and far weaker means, have provoked others no lesse to honour thee , and the Gospel ; who may justly rise up in judgment against us. Besides, (which makes our case far more miserable) we can scarce resolve to amend ; or if we do, we put off our conversion to hereafter ; when we were children, we deferred to repent till we were men : now we are men, we defer untill we be old men : and when we be old men we shall defer it untill death, if thou prevent us not : and yet we look for as much at rhine hands, as they which serve thee all their lives.

Perhaps we have a form of godliness, but thou who search'st the heart, and triest the reins , knowest that too often we deny the power of it : and that our Religion is much of it hypocrisie, our zeal envie, our wisdom policie, our peace security.

why should we not make every cogitation, speech, and action of ours, as to many steps to Heaven? yet thou shouldst now ask us what lust is assuaged, what affection qualified, what passion expelled, what sin repented of, what good performed, since we began to receive thy blessings to this day? we must needs confess against our selves, that all our thoughts, words, and works, have been the service of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil: yea, it hath been the course of our whole life, to leave that which thou commandest, and to do that which thou forbiddest: yet, miserable wretches that we are, if we could give thee our bodies and souls; they should be saved by it; but thou wert never the richer for them.

Thus while we look upon our selves, we are ashamed to lift up our eyes unto thee; yea, we are ready to despair with *Cain*: yet when we think upon thy Son, and the rich promises of the Gospel, our fear is in some measure turned into joy: while we consider that his righteousness for us, is more than our wickedness against our selves; onely give us faith we beseech thee, and settle it in thy beloved, that we may draw virtue from his death and resurrection, whereby we may be enabled so die unto sin, and live unto righteousness; and it sufficeth for all our iniquities, necessities, and infirmities.

It is true, O Lord, as wee were made after thine own Image; so by sin we have turned that Image of thine, into the Image of Satan: but turn thou us again, and we shall be turned into the Image and likeness of thy Son: And what though our

sin rebellion, our devotion deadnesse; and that we live so securely, as if we had no souls to save.

Indeed, thy Word and Spirit may work in us some flashes of desire, and purposes of better obedience; but we are constant in nothing, but in perpetual offending, onely therein we cease not: for when we are waking, our flesh tempts us to wickedness; if wee are sleeping, it sollicitates us to filthiness; or perhaps when we have offended thee all the day, at night we pray unto thee: but what is the issue of our praying? First we sin, and then we pray thee to forgive it; and then return to our sins again; as if we came to thee for no other end, but to crave leave to offend thee: Or, of thy granting our requests, we even dishonor thee, and blaspheme thy name, while thou do'st support and relieve us; run from thee, while thou do'st call us; and forget thee, while thou art feeding us: so thou sparest us, we sleep; and to morrow we sin again. O how justly mightest thou forsake us, as we forsake thee; and condemne us, whose consciences cannot but condemne our selves! But who can measure thy goodness, who givest all, and forgivest all? Though we be sinful, yet thou lovest us; though we be miserably ingrateful, yet thou most plentifully blestest us: What should we have, if we did serve thee, who hast done all these things for thine enemies? O that thou who hast so deared us to serve thee, wouldest also give us hearts and hands to serve thee with thine own gifts.

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fin be great, yet thy mercie is far greater then our fins either are, or can be: we cannot be so bad, as thou art good; nor so infinite in sinning, as thou art in pardoning, if we repent. O that we could repent! O that thou wouldest give us repentance! for we are weak, O Lord, and can no more turn our selvs, than we could at first make our selvs: yea, we are altogether dead in sin, so that we cannot stir the least joint, no not so much as feel our deadnesse, nor desire life, except thou be pleased to raise and restore our souls from the death of sin, and grave of long custome, to the life of grace: Apt wee are to all evil, but reprobate and indisposed to all grace and goodnesse; yea, to all the means thereof. Wee are altogether of our selvs unable to resist the force of our mighty adversaries, but do thou free our wills, and set to thy helping hand, in casting down by thy Spirit our raging lusts: and by thy grace subdue our untamed affections, and we shall henceforth as much honor thee, as by our wickednesse we have formerly dishonored thee.

Wherefore of thy goodnesse, and for thy great Names sake, we beseech thee take away our stony hearts, and give us hearts of flesh: enable us to repent what we have done, and never more to do what we have once repented, not fostering any one sin in our souls.

Reform and change our minds, wills, and affections, which we have corrupted; remove all impediments which hinder us from serving of thee, and direct all our thoughts, speeches, and actions to thy glory, as thou hast directed our eternal salvation thereunto. Let not Satan any longer prevail, in causing us to defer our repentance; since we know, that late repentance is seldom sincere, and that sicknesse is no fit time for so

And because infidelitie is the bitter root of all wickednesse, and a lively faith the true mother of all grace and goodnesse: nor are wee Christians indeed, except we imitate Christ, and square our lives according to the rule of thy Word: Give us that faith which manifesteth it self by a godly life; which purifieth the heart, worketh by love, and sanctifieth the whole man throughout. Yea since, if our faith be true and

great a work ; as many have found that are now in Hell : Neither is it reasonable, thou shouldest accept of our feeble and decrepit old age, when we have spent all the flower, and strength of our youth, in serving of Satan, not once minding to leave sin, until sin left us.

Yea, O Lord, give us firmly to resolve, speedily to begin, and continually to persevere, in doing and suffering thine holy will : Inform and reform us so, that we may neither mis-believe, nor mis-live : subdue our lusts to our wills, submit our wills to reason, our reason to faith ; our faith, our reason, our wills, our selves, to thy blessed Word and Will. Dispell the thick mists and clouds of our sins, which corrupt our souls, and darken our understandings ; separate them from us, which wou'd separate us from thee : Yea, remove them out of thy sight also, we most humbly beseech thee, as far as the East is from the West ; and in the merits of thy Son, pardon and forgive us all those evils, which either in thought, word, or deed, we have this day, or any time heretofore committed against thee : whether they be the sins of our youth, or of our age ; of omission, or commission ; whether committed of ignorance, of knowledge, or against conscience, and the many checks and motions of thy holy spirit.

And now, O Lord, seeing the time approacheth which thou hast appointed for rest ; and because wee can neither wake nor sleep without thee, who hast made the day and night, and rulest both : therefore into thy hands we commend our souls and bodies, beseeching thee to watch over us this night, and preserve

saving, it can no more be severed from unfained repentance, and sanctification, then life can be without motion, or the sun without light ; give us spiritual wisdom, to try and examine our selves, whether we be in the faith or not : that so we may not be deluded with opinion onely, as thousands are.

Discover unto us the emptinesse, vanity and insufficiencie of the things here below, to do our poor souls the least good ; that so we may be induced to set an higher price upon Jesus Christ, who is the life of our lives, and the soul of our souls : considering, that if we have him, wee want nothing ; if we want him, wee have nothing.

Finally, O Lord, give unto us, and increase in us all spiritual graces : lighten our minds with the knowledge of thy truth, and inflame our hearts with the love of whatsoever is good ; that we may esteem it our meat and drink to do thy blessed will. Give us religious thoughts, godly desires, zealous affections, holy endeavours, assured perswasions of faith, stedfast waiting through hope, constancy in suffering through patience, and hearty rejoicing from love : regenerate our minds, purifie our natures, turn all our joies into the joy of the Holy Ghost ; and all our peace into the peace of conscience ; and all our fears into the fear of sin, that we may love righteousness, with as great good will, as ever we loved wickednesse ; and go before others in thankfulness towards thee, as far as thou goest in mercy towards us before them.

Give us victory in temptation, patience in sickness, contentment in poverty, joy in distress, hope in troubles,

us from all our spiritual, and bodily troubles, confidence in the hour of enemies; from thieves, fire, and from death: give us alwaies to think and all other dangers. meditate of the hour of death, the day of judgment, the joies of heaven, and the pains of hell; together with the ransom which thy Son paid, to redeem us from the one, and to purchase for us the other: so shall neither thy benefits, nor thy chastisements, nor thy Word return ineffectual: but accomplish that for which they were sent, until we be wholly renewed to the image of thy Son.

These things we humbly beg at thy fatherly hands, and whatsoever else thou knowest in thy divine wisdom to be needful and necessary for our souls, or bodies, or estates, or names, or friends, or the whole Church, better then we our selves can either ask or think: and that for thy Names sake, for thy promise sake, for thy mercies sake, for thy Sons sake, who suffered for sin, and sinned not; and whose righteousness pleadeth for our unrighteousness: in him it is that we come unto thee, in him we call upon thee, who is our Redeemer, our Preserver, and our Saviour; to whom with Thee, and thy blessed Spirit, be ascribed as is most due, all honour, glory, praise, power, might, majesty, dominion, and hearty thanksgiving, the rest of this night following, and for evermore, *Amen.*

A Praier to be used at any time.



Almighty, Eternall, most Glorious, and onely wise God; giver to them which want, comforter of them which suffer, and forgiver of them that repent; whom truly to know, is everlasting life: Wee thy poor creatures acknowledge and confess unto thee, who knowest the secrets and desires of all hearts: that—

—of our selves, we are not worthy to lift up our eyes to heaven, much less to present our selves before thy Majesty with the least confidence, that thou shouldest hear our prayers, or accept of our services: but rather that thou shouldest take these our confessions, and accordingly condemne us to the lowest place in Hell; for our continually

—we have used all our wisdom, to commit the foolishness of sin: our whole conversation hath been to serve Satan, and fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Wee even suck in iniquity like water, and draw on sin as it were, with cartropes.

Neither is there any part, power, function, or faculty, either of our souls

ally abusing thy mercy, and those many means of grace, which in thy long suffering thou hast afforded for our reclaiming. wee are the cursed seed of rebellious Parents, wee were conceived in sin, and born the children of wrath: And whereas thou mightest have executed thy fierce displeasure upon us, so soon as thou gavest us being; and so prevented our further dishonouring thee: wee have instead of humbling ourselves before thee our God, and seeking reconciliation with thy Majestic: done nothing from our infancy, but added sin unto sin, in breaking every one of thine holy Laws, which thou hast given us as rules and directions to walk by, and to keep us from sinning. Yea, there is not one of thy righteous precepts, which we have not broken more times, and ways, then we can express: so far have wee been from a privative holiness, in reforming that which is evil: and a positive holiness in performing that which is good: which thou might justly require of us, being wee had once ability so to do, if wee had not wilfully lost it: for thou didst form us righteous and holy, had not wee deform'd our selves; whereas now like Satan, wee can do nothing else but sin, and make others sin too, who would not so sin, but for us: for we have an army of unclean desires, that perpetually fight against our souls: whereby wee are continually tempted, drawn away, and enticed through our own concupiscence. Yea, thou knowest, that the heart of man is deceitfull above all things; and that the imaginations thereof, are onely, and continually evil. O the infinitely intricate windings and turnings of the dark Labyrinths of mans heart! who finds not

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or bodies, which is not become a ready instrument to dishonour thee: for as our heart is a root of all corruption, a seed-plot of all sin; so our eyes, are eyes of vaukie; our ears, ears of folly; our mouthes, mouthes of deceit; our hands, hands of inquiry: and every part doth dishonour thee, which yet would be glorified of thee. The understanding which was given us to learn virtue, is apt now to apprehend nothing but sin; the will which was given us to affect righteousness, is apt now to love nothing but wickedness; the memory which was given us to remember good things, is apt now to keep nothing but evil things: for sin (like a spreading leprosie) is so grown over us, that from the crown of our heads, to the soles of our feet, there is nothing whole therein, but wounds, and swellings; and sores full of corruption. Yea, our souls and bodies are even a very sink of sin; for like the common shoar, we have not refused to welcome any, the most loathsome pollutions, that either the world, our own corruption, or the Devill at any time hath offered unto us.

Or, admit we are exempt from some evils, wee may thank thee, and not our selves for it: for wee are ready without thy restraining grace, to run out into all manner of enormities whatsoever: we are swift to all evil, but to all good immoveable: when we do evil, we do it chearfully, and quickly, and easily; but if we do any good, wee do it faintly, and slowly, and slackly. when did we talk without vanity? when did we give without hypocrisy? when did wee bargain without deceit? when did we reprove without anger, or envy? when did

wee

in himself an indisposition of mind to all good, and an inclination to all evil?

And according to this our inclination, hath been our practice; we have yielded our hearts as cages to entertain all manner of unclean spirits, when on the contrary we have refused to yield them as Temples for thine holy Spirit to dwell in.

Yet, miserable wretches as we are, we like our own condition so well, that we are not willing to go out of our selves unto thee; who wouldest now make us, according to the Image of thy Son; for by long custom, we have so turned delight into necessity, that we can as willingly leave to live, as leave our lusts; yea, we love our sins so well, and so much above our souls, that (except thou change our hearts) we shall chuse to go to Hell, rather then part with them. Thou hast used all manner of means to reclaim us, but nothing will serve; neither the menaces and terrours of thy Law, nor the precepts and sweet promises of thy Gospel can do it: we are neither softened with benefits, nor broken with punishments; thy severity will not terrifie us, nor thy kindness mollifie us. No shouldest thou send an Angel from the dead to warn us, all persuasions would be in vain, since we hear Moses and the Prophets, Christ and his Apostles daily, and are never the better.

True, O Lord, there is a main reason of it, which we cannot now help; for naturally we have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, hearts and understand not. Yea, we are quite dead in sin, untill thou doest hear our ears, soften our hearts, and break in upon our consciences by the irresistible power of thy Spirit, and by going along with thy word, shall quicken our souls, and regenerate

we hear without weary somness? when did wee pray without tediousness? such is our corruption, as if we were made to sin, in deed, in word, or in thought. O the pride, passion, lust, envy, ignorance, awkwardnesse, hypocrisie, infidelity, vain thoughts, unprofitableness, and the like; which cleaves to our very best actions! and how full of infirmity are our primest performances! for we have not done any one action legally justifiable all our dayes: neither can ought we do, abide the examination of thy strict justice, untill it be covered with thy Sons righteousness; and the corruption thereof washed away in his most precious blood. Yea, if thou shouldest behold these our prayers, as they bee in themselves, without having respect unto us in Christ Jesus; they would appear no better in thy sight, then a menstruous cloth.

generate the whole man anew: In the meantime wee are ready to receive all, and return nothing but sin and disobedience; wherein wee more then abound: for wee have done more against thee this week, then wee have done for thee ever since we were born. And whereas the least of thy mercies, is greater then all the curtesies of men, wee are not so thankfull to thee for them all, as wee are to a friend for some one good turn.

Neither do wee alone lay the fault upon our inability, or want of supply from thee; but upon our own perversnesse, and want of endeavour, and putting forth that strength and ability, which thou hast given us: for how long hast thou (O most gracious God) stood at the doors of our hearts; and how often hast thou knock'd, when we have refused to open, and let thee in; And if at any time we have been over-ruled by the good motions of thy holy Spirit, yet have wee still returned (with the Dog) to our vomit, and (with the Sow) refused the clear streams of thy Commandements, to wallow in the myre of our filthy sins: whereby we have justly deserved, that thou shouldst have called us to an account in the dead of our sleep, and have judg'd us to eternall destruction; and never have suffered us again to have seen the light of the Sun: the remembrance of which, together with our other rebellions, when we rightly consider them, makes us even speechless like him in the Gospell: as neither expecting mercy, nor daring to ask it.

Howbeit, when wee call to mind thy manifold mercies, shewed to Manasses, Paul, Mary Magdalen, the Thief, and the Prodigall Son, with many others; who were no less vile then wee, and who notwithstanding found thee more ready to hear, then they were to ask; and to give above what they durst presume to beg: wee stay our selves, and receive some encouragement from the

the application of the merits of Christ Jesus; which thou hast promised, shall be a sufficient satisfaction for all our sins: and the rather, for that thou canst all that are weary and heaue laden, with the burthen of their sins unto thee; with promise that thou wilt ease them: and hast promised, that though our sins be as red as scarlet, thou wilt make them white as snow, and that thou wilt not the death of a sinner, but that he turn from his wickedness and live: and that if a sinner doth repent him of his sins, from the bottom of his heart; thou wilt blot out all his wickedness out of thy remembrance. And lest wee should yet be discouraged, thou who dost not less accept the will of David, then the oft of Solomon, hast further promised, that if there be but first a willing mind, thou wilt accept of us according to that which we have, and not according to that which wee have not.

But forasmuch O Lord, as thou knowest, that is not in man to turn his own heart, unless thou dost first give him grace to convert; for thou O Lord, must work in us both the will and the deed: and being that it is as easie with thee to make us righteous and holy, as to bid us be such, O our God, give us ability, and willingness to do what thou commandest, and then command what thou wilt; and thou shalt find us ready to do thy blessed will. Wherefore give to us, and increase in us all Christian graces, that wee may know, and believe, and repent, and amend, and persevere in well doing. Create in us O Lord, a new heart, and renew a right spirit within us: take away from us our greedy desire of committing sin, and enable us by the powerfull assistance of thy grace, more willingly to obey thee in every of thy commandments then ever wee have the contrary.

Be favourable to thy people every where; look down in much compassion upon thy Militant Church, and every severall member thereof: blesse it in all places with peace and truth, hedge it about with thy providence, defend it from the mischievous designs, and attempts of thine, and her malicious enemies: let thy Gospell go on and conquer, mangre all opposition; that Religion and uprightnes of heart may be highly set on with all, and all prophaneities may be trod under foot. More particularly, be mercifull to this sinfull Land; the civill Magistrates, the painful Ministers, the two Universities; those people that sit yet in darkness; all the afflicted members of thy Son. Lord, comfort the comfortless, strengthen the weak, bind up the broken hearted, make the bed of the sick, be a father to the fatherless, and

Yea, let thy Spirit bear such rule in everyone of our hearts, that neither Satan that forraie enemy, and roaring Lyon, which seeketh to devour us, may invade us; nor our own concupiscence, that home-bred traitor, may by conspiring with the world, work the ruine and overthrow of our poor souls; but that all our wills which have been altogether rebellious, our hearts which have been the receptacles of unclean spirits, & our affections which are altogether carnall, may be wholly framed according to thy holy & heavenly will. and that we may the better know how to avoyd the evill, and do the good, let thy word as a light, discover unto us all the sleights and snares of our spirituall adversaries: yea, make it unto us as the Star which led unto Christ; and thy benefits like the Pillar which brought to the Land of Promise; and

an husband to the widdow; cloath the naked, feed the hungry, visit the prisoners, relieve the oppressed, sanctifie unto them all their afflictions, and turn all things to the best to them that fear thee.

Prosper the Armies that fight thy battells, and shew a difference between thy servants, and thine enemies, as thou did'st between the Israelites and the Egyptians; that the one may bee confirmed, and the other reclaimed.

These,

thy Cross like the Messenger, that compelled guests unto the Banquet.

Give us, O Lord; to consider, that although sin in the beginning seem never so sweet unto us, yet in the end it will prove the bane, and ruine both of body and soul: and so assist us with thy grace, that wee may willingly part with our right eyes of pleasure, and our right hands of profit, rather then sin against thee, and wrong our own consciences: considering that it would bee an hard bargain, for us to win the whole world, and lose our own souls.

Blesse, preserve and keep us from all the temptations of Satan, the world, and our wicked hearts: from pride, that Lucifer-like sin, which is the fore-runner of destruction; considering that thou resistest the proud, and givest grace to the humble: from covetousnesse, which is the root of all evil; being taught out of thy word, that the love of money hath caused many to fall into diverse temptations, and snares, which drown them in perdition and destruction; from cruelty, that infernal evil, of which thou hast said, that there shall be judgment mercilesse, to him that sheweth not mercie: from hypocrisie, that sin with two faces, whose reward is double damnation; and the rather, because wickednesse doth most rancle the heart, when it is kept in, and dissembled; and for that in all the Scriptures, we read not of an hypocrites repentance: from whoredom, which is a sin against a man's own body, and the most inexcusable: considering the remedy which thou hast appointed against it: for the punishment whereof, the Law ordained death, and the Gospel excludeth from the Kingdom of Heaven; from prophanation of thy day, considering thou hast said, that whoso-

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ever sanctifieth it not, shall bee cut off from thy people; and didst command that he should be stoned to death who only gathered a few sticks on that day: from swearing, which is the language of hell; considering that because of oaths the Land doth mourn, and thou hast threatned that thy curse shall never depart from the house of the sweaver: from drunkenness, that monster with many heads, and worse than beast like sin, which in thy word hath many fearfull woes denounced against it: and the rather, for that it is a sin (like the pit of Hell) out of which there is small hope of redemption.

Finally, O Lord, give us strength to resist temptation, patience to endure affliction, and constancie to persevere unto the end in thy truth: that so having passed our pilgrimage here, according to thy will, we may be at rest with thee hereafter, both in the night of death, when our bodies shall sleep in the grave, and in the day of our resurrection; when they shall awake to judgement, and both bodies and souls enjoy everlasting blisse.

These, and all other good things, which for our blindness we cannot ask, vouchsafe to give us thine unworthy servants, not for our sakes, but for thy mercies sake; and for thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christs sake, in whom thou art well-pleased; and in whom thou wast fully satisfied upon the Crosse for our sins: who with thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth ever one God, world without end.

Let thy mighty hand, and out-stretched arm, O Lord, be still our defence; thy mercie and loving kindnesse in Jesus Christ thy dear Son, our salvation; thy true and holy word our instruction; thy grace and holy Spirit our comfort, consolation, illumination, and sanctification, now and for ever, Amen.

A Thanksgiving to be brought in to any, or every one of them, next before the Conclusion, where the hand is placed.

AND as we pray unto thee, so we desire also to praise thee: rendering unto thy Majestic upon the bended knees of our hearts, all possible
 Laud,

laud, and thanksgiving, for all thy mercies and favours, spiritual and corporal, temporal and eternal: For that thou hast freely elected us to salvation from all eternity; when thou hast passed by many millions of others, both Men and Angels, whereas we deserved to perish no lesse then they; and thou mightest justly have chosen them, and left us: for that thou hast created us Men, and not Beasts; in *England*, not in *Aethiopia*, or any other savage Nation: in this clear and bright time of the Gospel, not in the darknesse of Paganisme, or Popery. For thine unexpressible love, in redeeming us out of Hell, and from those unsufferable and endlesse torments, by the precious blood of thy dear Son: who spared not himself, that thou mightest spare us. For calling us home to thee by the Ministry of thy Word, and the work of thy good Spirit. For the long continuance of thy Gospel with us, (the best of blessings). For sparing us so long, and giving us so large a time of repentance. For justifying, and in some measure sanctifying us, and giving us ground for assured hope of being glorified in thy heavenly Kingdom. For preserving us from so infinite many perils and dangers, which might easily have befallen us every day, to the taking away of either our estates, our limbs, or our lives. For so plentifully and graciously blessing us all our life long, with many and manifold good things; both for necessity and delight. For peace of conscience, and content of minde. For our health, wealth, limbs, senses, food, raiment, liberty, prosperity. For thy great mercie in correcting us, and turning thy corrections to our good. For preserving us in the night past from all dangers of body and soul; and for infinite more mercies, of which we could not well want any one: and which are all greatned, by being bestowed upon us, who were so unworthy; and have been so ungrateful for the same. O that we could answer thee in our thankfulness, and obedient walking, one for a thousand!

Neither are we unmindful of those national blessings, which thou hast vouchsafed unto our Land in general: as namely, that deliverance from the Spanish Invasion in 88, and from that devilish design of the Gunpowder-Treason: for preserving us from the noisome, and devouring Plague and Pestilence. Lord grant, that our great unthankfulness for these thy mercies, may not cause thee to deliver us into the hands of our enemies: and although we have justly thereby deserved the same, yet we beseech thee, give us not up unto their wills, neither suffer Popery ever to bear rule over us; nor thy blessed Word and Sacraments to be taken away from us; but continue them unto us, and to our posterity after us, if it be thy good pleasure; untill the coming of thy Christ.

Babes that are inexpert in the word of righteousness, use milk: but strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, Heb. 5. 13, 14.

